

COMMANDERS OF THE MUSLIM ARMY

(Among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ)



By: Mahmood Ahmad Ghadanfar

DARUSSALAM

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In the Name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

“Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allâh. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allâh and (His) Good Pleasure. The mark of them (i.e. of their Faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration (during prayers). This is their description in the Taurât (Torah). But their description in the Injeel (Gospel) is like a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, and becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allâh has promised those among them who believe (i.e. all those who follow Islâmic Monotheism, the religion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ till the Day of Resurrection) and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward (i.e. Paradise).” (48:29)

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Publishers Note

All Praises are due to Allâh the Almighty, the Lord of all that exists. May Allâh's peace and blessing be upon His final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Darussalam is pleased to present this valuable book, '*Commanders of the Muslim Army (Among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ)*' compiled in the Urdu language, by a great scholar and a compiler of Islamic books, Mahmood Ahmad Ghadanfar and translated by our Islamic sister Jamila Muhammad Qawi.

This book is about the life stories of the Prophet's Companions who led the Muslim army that was trained by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Once during the training when the Prophet ﷺ asked about the strategy to adopt in the battle, one of his Companion, 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ had stood up with his bow in his hand and replied:

"When the enemy is a hundred yards away, we will use our bows and arrows; when the enemy comes closer, we will fight with our spears; when the spears break, we will have a hand to hand combat with our swords."

When the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he said:

"Doubtless this was the way to fight a battle. Whoever wishes to take part in a battle should adopt the strategy of 'Âsim bin Thabat."

These great martial Commanders improved upon and developed the strategies and principles first enunciated by the Prophet ﷺ. They loved death more than life in their pursuit of the righteous and true

religion, therefore sometimes the opposing forces were ten times larger than the Muslim army and with superior arms, yet most often it were the forces of Islam which were victorious. Therefore the Prophet ﷺ gave some of them the title of *Saifullâh* (Sword of Allâh) and the title of Lion of Allâh.

After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, the empire of Islam spread over an area of ten hundred thousand square miles. We should have to study inevitably the lives of these remarkable military leaders if we are deeply interested in learning about the Islamic history.

Pray to Allâh the Almighty that He grants them all - the writer, translator and editor and everyone else who participated by any means - the best reward in this world and in the Hereafter, for having supported in the completion of such a valuable book. Âmeen.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager
Darussalam

Preface

All Praise is for Allâh Almighty and may Allâh Bless the Prophet, his family and his Companions.

This book is about the lives of those pre-eminent and noble Companions of the Prophet ﷺ who led the forces of Islam in the violent and strife-torn arenas of conflict against the *Kuffar* or disbelievers. These were the warriors who after a vigorous training had turned to pure gold after being trained by the supreme Commander, the mercy to mankind, and the embodiment of goodness, the king of Al-Madinah, Muhammad ﷺ. Experts in the art of war were amazed and overwhelmed when they studied their exploits of bravery and valour. They struck terror in the hearts of the enemy and the stronghold sand palaces of Qaeser and Kisra trembled before their might.

They lived in austerity and simplicity, yet their style was regal. They were not cowed down by the enemy, they did not tremble before him in terror, neither could they be deterred from the pursuit of their objective. They loved death more than life in their pursuit of the righteous and true. Their gaze was modest, their hearts burned with passionate love of Allâh Almighty, their arms were powerful and their feet stood surprisingly firm and steady as they fought for what their conscience told them was moral and virtuous. In whichever direction they turned, they conquered region after region. Under the leadership of the Prophet ﷺ they performed stunning deeds of valor and daring in the battlefields. In no time at all the stories of their great and noble exploits became the assurances of their bravery and the tales of their heroism were guarantees of their fervour and ardour. These epic

stories spread in all directions. The battles fought during the Prophet's time were the most excellent and exemplary in all respects. Many times the forces of Islam faced armies which were much larger. Sometimes the opposing forces were ten times larger than the Prophet's army, and also had a larger number of superior arms and equipment, yet most often it was the forces of Islam which were victorious. Sociologists are amazed by the fact that the Islamic state started off as a small city state and, expanded at an average rate of two hundred square miles per day. Ten years later at the death of the Prophet ﷺ the empire of Islam was spread over an area of ten hundred thousand square miles.

When one studies the Islamic era spanning the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ from the point of view of conquest and occupation of lands, their organization, management and administration, this amazement subsides. Every stage and step seems to have been patterned according to a well-defined, comprehensive and well thought out plan.

- Stability of the conquered lands.
- Education, moral and religious training of the conquered peoples.
- The education and training of the managers and administrators in morals, intellect and skills.
- An attempt to extend the limits of the Islamic Empire, by training military experts. This training was moral and intellectual. Technical know - how was not neglected either. Under their leadership the Islamic army forged their way into new territories in all directions; these were basic, innovative and revolutionary steps that resulted in astounding exploits. As a result within the short span of fifteen years after the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ, most of the areas of the two major continents of Asia and Africa, were under the control of the Muslims.

When a student of Islamic history observes these facts, he is inevitably and deeply interested to learn about the lives of these remarkable military leaders. He would like to study their characters, their code of life and the strategies they employed. He would like to gain enlightenment from these beacons of the past in order to illuminate such light as make the world of Islam shine in the present, and also to

blaze a trail for future generations.

Human nature and the basic strategies of war normally do not change; it is for this reason that invaluable lessons can be gained even from the battles fought far back in ancient recorded history. With this purpose in mind biographical sketches of these great generals of the early years of Islam are being presented; their incredible and extraordinary military achievements have added many a glorious and golden chapter to the history of mankind.

Doubtless those great personalities who were trained by the greatest Commander of Arab and Ajam, the Sultan of Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ himself, had been transformed by personal contact with his radiant personality. Their eyes witnessed his greatness, which had become the axis of their hearts souls and very existence. The only meaning and purpose of their lives was to achieve martyrdom in the cause of Islam.

A study of the enviable lives and characters of these great generals will inspire modern day *Mujâhideen*,¹ soldiers and military leaders with the spirit of sacrifice and *Jihâd*.² The battles fought during the life of the Prophet ﷺ introduced and made crystal-clear such principles of military strategy as had never been used in human history. The brilliance of the strategies the Prophet ﷺ used as the Commander-in-Chief in the battle of Badr cannot be or ignored even in the context of modern day warfare. The very first martial tactics employed by the small Islamic State in its infancy were remarkably well organized and disciplined, for the example:

- Before leaving for the battlefield a Deputy was appointed in Al-Madinah.
- The Muslim army was divided into different groups or divisions and a commander was appointed for each of these divisions.
- Qais Al Mâzni Ansari was appointed to watch over the rear section of the army.

¹ Those who fight in a war for Islam. (plural)

² *Jihâd* – a holy war for Allah Almighty and the defence of Islam and Muslims.

- The Muslim army reached the battlefield of Badr first and took control of the stream there, so that the enemy could not face the Muslim army for long without water.
- Even before the battle started, it was realized that the group formation of the Muslim army should be given a great deal of attention. This was because the opposing army outnumbered them three to one.
- After the formation the Prophet ﷺ ordered that no *Mujâhid* should take any step on his own, and must wait for orders from him.
- He ordered that the *Mujâhideen* should shoot their arrows only when the enemy came within range; if he was beyond their range they should not shoot. This was to avoid wastage of arms and equipment. If the enemy was very close then they should fight with their spears; if they were even closer then they should use their swords to defend themselves.
- On one occasion he pointed out to his army that they should be aware that the most effective strength and strategy lay in the practice of *Rummi*. This meant to practice the art of throwing. This covers all kinds of weapons of war, which are either thrown or shot. Missiles, bombs or cannons from which shots are fired - all belong to this category of weapons. Even in the changed war scenario of today, the principle of *Rummi* is of prime importance; as this is where the real strength of an army lies. This principle and its significant contribution to the victory and might of a military force was first enunciated by the Prophet ﷺ. The degree of superiority and dominance of one country over another is in direct proportion to its strength and power.
- In the battle of Badr a special covered platform was erected for the Prophet ﷺ, at the rear of the place where the army was deployed.
- The rules and principles of warfare were promulgated and declared. Women, children, people not taking part in active warfare and all senior citizens were not to be killed or harmed in any way.
- In the battle of Uhud, the Prophet ﷺ, inspected the battlefield and

sensing the various possibilities of danger, posted a squad of fifty archers on a mountain. They were ordered to stick to their positions under all circumstances. The vital importance of this positioning was realized when the enemy, finding this strategic position unoccupied unexpectedly attacked the Muslim army and caused significant damage.

- In the battle of *Ahzab*, the digging of the trenches gave total protection from the enemy to Islam's first capital, Al-Madinah. This innovative and unusual move of digging trenches around a city for the purpose of protecting it astonished Abu Sufyān, the Commander of the enemy forces. Trenches are today an integral and important part of defensive fortification strategy.

All these steps enumerated above were basically innovative military strategies, which were probably introduced for the first time in human history. This book recounts the amazing exploits of the great heroes who led the first Islamic forces in battle, and had been trained by the Prophet ﷺ. An experienced enemy and leader like Wrath Abu Sufyān had been nonplussed by these innovative measures. These great martial heroes of Islam improved upon and developed the strategies and principles first enunciated by the Prophet ﷺ. Even in a state of war they did not lose sight of the great moral and ethical values taught them by the Prophet ﷺ.

Pray to Allāh Almighty that He grant abundant Divine Guidance to the military experts, generals, the young soldiers and *Mujāhideen* to follow in the footsteps of these great Companions and generals and bring back the past glories of Islam.

May Allāh Almighty Shower His Blessings on the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions!

Mahmood Ahmad Ghadanfar

The Qualities of a Muslim Commander

All Praise is for Allâh Almighty. May He Shower Peace and Blessings on His Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions.

The qualities and excellence essential for a Muslim general in the field of warfare are listed below -

1. True, constant and firm Faith.
2. Dignified personality.
3. Valorous and courageous.
4. Steadfast and resolute of purpose.
5. Strength of will and ability to execute.
6. Charismatic and magnetic personality.
7. Eloquent.
8. Well-equipped.
9. Generosity and liberality.
10. A sense of justice and fair play.

Let us go a little deeper into the meaning, significance and importance of these qualities:

1. True, constant and firm Faith

It is essential for a military man to have true and firm Faith in order to lead in the political and missionary spheres. A strong, firm and solid faith leaves a lasting and deep influence on the personality. This is a

basic virtue that empowers the heart with courage, valour and a total lack of fear and ambition. Whether the army faces victory and glory or obstacles and defeat, intelligence and wisdom are never thrown off balance. In the battlefield whether faced with glorious triumph or humiliating defeat, only that army adopts a balanced viewpoint and mode of operation, which has the right faith and the right perspective. It has often been seen in martial history that a victorious army and its general lose all sense of proportion and display a total loss of sense of proportion. It is intoxicated with its success and goes berserk. Civilians are killed, women are raped and human dignity is insulted and betrayed. The social system of the conquered territory is turned upside down, and social and moral values are eroded and destroyed. But the Muslim generals regard victory with modesty and humility as a blessing and gift of Allâh Almighty. This attitude is solely due to trust, faith and a right sense of values.

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah triumphantly after conquering it, his head was bowed low down on the hump of his horse in gratitude to Allâh Almighty, His Creator. He declared universal amnesty for all the people of Makkah. Similarly, a successful general who in war faces obstacles, problems and adverse conditions, instead of losing heart, turns and moves closer to Allâh ﷺ. He faces all difficulties with courage and bravery. This competence and ability is born of confident reliance on, and perfect and absolute trust in Allâh Almighty.

This is the reason why the Prophet ﷺ, instead of losing hope in the disaster of the battle of Uhud, led his injured *Mujâhideen* right up to Hamra' Al-Asad in hot pursuit of the Quraish without giving them an opportunity to turn around and enter Al-Madinah to celebrate their success. This shows that if the leading general is courageous and ambitious, he can recoup his losses and turn defeat into victory. Misfortunes and defeats fail to overcome his high spirits and, ultimately it is this high morale which lifts up the sagging spirits of his soldiers and leads them to triumph.

One day the Commander-in-Chief of the Muslims, Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, was lying down in the shade of the Ka'bah, resting. One of his most loyal Companion Khabbab bin Aratt, who had suffered deeply from

the *Kuffar*, asked him when Allâh Almighty would help them; the suffering and cruelty had reached its utmost limits. The Prophet ﷺ sat up and said:

“O Khabbab, Are you giving up so easily with just these little problems? Our predecessors who spoke up for the Truth and worshipped the Truth had suffered much more than us. Saws were used to tear them apart, and combs made of iron were used to rake their flesh, but they remained stubbornly adherent to the Truth. The greatest torture and tyranny failed to make them recant or retract an inch from their positions. O Khabbab, be patient and very soon you will see for yourself the gentle and halcyon days of peace everywhere. The land of Arab will become the cradle of loving and serene brotherhood. From San'a' to Hader Al-Moat wayfarers will be able to travel in peace, with no fear of danger.”

Calamities, misfortunes and problems have to be faced with patience and fortitude because they prove to be the forerunners of victory and success. And how does one inculcate these qualities? They are born of a deep and abiding faith in Allâh Almighty; many a time, because of these qualities, events which bewilder man's powers of reason and logic occur in the battlefield. One of the greatest generals in the history of Islam, Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه, right in front of the enemy fearlessly and boldly drank up a bottle of deadly poison. This lethal dose of poison did him no harm! This was because he had absolute faith that Allâh Almighty could negate the effect of the poison. The enemy was simply astounded!

Another great general, Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs رضي الله عنه, led his horse into the deep waters of the River Dajlah, and crossed over, safe and sound to the other side to the utter amazement of the enemy Persian army which was standing there. He thus proved that if Allâh Almighty is the Helper, then nothing can harm or injure people who have pure and absolute faith in Him.

After the resounding victory in the battle of Yarmook, the great General Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه received a letter dismissing him from service. Very calmly he said:

"I did not fight in the battlefield for *Amir-ul-Mo'mineen* 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ; I fought to bring glory to Allâh and Islam. I can continue to perform my duty even as an ordinary soldier. Therefore I do not regret receiving a letter of dismissal."

Such an attitude can only be the result of the deep faith and a righteous viewpoint.

2. Dignified personality

In order to fulfill one's duties in the army military leaders are made to pass through certain stages in the course of their training. Special care is taken to see that they are trained according to a certain manner. This is in order to cultivate an imposing and dignified personality. The army has to have discipline and a sense of order. Therefore men who have to fulfill the duties of military leadership have to possess an impressive personality. This imposing dignity and a certain aura of majesty impresses and overawes the onlooker; and feelings of love, respect and reverence take root in his heart. This blessed quality of dignity is a gift of Allâh Almighty. It can become part of one's personality only if there is true Faith, fear of Allâh Almighty, integrity, and an effort to guard moral and ethical values.

Not one person had the courage to look the Prophet ﷺ in the eye. When he spoke the effect was almost as if the persons addressed had been mesmerized and could not move. There is no parallel in human history of a person evoking such a response. He was respected, revered and inspired awe and love. *Amirul-Mo'mineen* 'Umar Farooq ﷺ had such a dignified bearing and was so awe-inspiring that people felt nervous to speak to him. Some of the companions told 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ that they felt scared to talk to the *Amirul-Mo'mineen*, and that he should adopt a softer attitude. When he came to know of this, he offered this supplication to Allâh ﷺ:

"O Allâh Almighty increase my dignity day by day, so that I may be better able to spread Your true Message."

There are examples in society where a man may appear very strong, but unfortunately lacks a dignified personal presence. Thus he has absolutely no value or merit in the affections of people. It is essential for

a Muslim general to have a very dignified and awe-inspiring personality; otherwise he cannot discharge his duties and responsibilities of leadership to perfection, or even to near-perfection. The Prophet ﷺ had said:

“I have been granted such majesty and dignity that the enemy who is a month away from me (in terms of travelling distance) starts to tremble when he hears my name.”

3. Valour and Courage

Only that person can fulfill the responsibilities of a leader in the battlefield who is the personification of bravery, valour, daring and fearlessness. When the conditions in war are extremely unfavourable only a daring and fearless man can overcome and control them. 'Ali رضي الله عنه says that whenever matters took a critical turn in a battle they used to look at the bold and confident attitude of the Prophet ﷺ and gain courage. Whenever the fighting was at its most intense he would display extraordinary daring and nerve and move as close as possible to the enemy and try to overwhelm him. All his *Mujâhideen* would then gain courage and aspire to follow his example.

When Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه went into the battlefield to face the Roman General, he realized that his steed was weaker in comparison with the enemy. The Roman of course wanted to take the fullest possible advantage of the situation. Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه guessed his intentions and made a very daring counter move. He leapt down from his horse and struck a powerful blow with his sword at the leg of the Roman's horse. Its leg broke and he fell to the ground; his rider too fell at the feet of Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه, who in a flash cut off his neck. Having got rid of his enemy he calmly sat down and had his meal right there!

4. Steadfast and resolute of purpose

In the arena of war the ordinary soldier in the army keeps up his morale and is bold as long as his Commander displays a steadfast and resolute attitude. As soon as the general shows hesitation or indecisiveness, the army too begins to falter. When the enemy exerts intense pressure it is the primary and most important duty of the

Commander too not only built up, but to keep up the morale of his men. And only that General can fulfill this duty to the best degree who, is consistently resolute, steadfast, intrepid and brave. During the battle of Hunnain when the army was falling apart due to the pressure being exerted by the enemy the Prophet ﷺ stood firm in the battlefield and with great fervour said:

"I am the True Prophet, it is no lie, and I am the son of 'Abdul Mutallib!"

Seeing the resolute stand taken by him, the army which was scattering in fear rallied round him. Thus it is seen that whenever a crisis occurs in battle and the army faces a difficult situation, the commander should display confidence and steadfastness. This is the only way to win lost causes. This is the primary and essential military responsibility of a general.

The Qur'ân gives a golden principle about how to inculcate and develop this invaluable quality of steadfastness and resoluteness. Allâh Almighty says:

"O you who believe! If you will help (in the cause of) Allâh, He will help you, and make your foothold firm." (47:7)

In order to attain and achieve this great quality one must be prepared to sacrifice one's life and possessions to propagate and promote the religion of Allâh Almighty. Whosoever helps to spread the religion of Allâh Almighty, he will find Him to be his Supporter and Protector. And if Allâh Almighty gives him His Support and Protection then he is assured success now and in the Hereafter. Steadfastness is the stepping stone to real success as the Noble Qur'ân has instructed. The Noble Qur'ân says:

"O you who believe! When you meet (an enemy) take a firm stand against them and remember the Name of Allâh much (both with tongue and mind), so that you may be successful." (8:45)

In this *Âyah* of the Noble Qur'ân the glad tidings have been given that when opposing the enemy firmness and determination should be displayed and Allâh Almighty should be remembered and appealed

to fervently at all times. This multiplies the chances of success. Firmness of purpose and remembrance of Allâh ﷺ are very important for a Muslim commander.

5. Strength of will and ability to execute

Any successful general has to have a strong will and be competent and efficient enough to have his orders executed. If he does not have this ability he will not be able to do justice to his plan.

A determined general will be resolute and firm in making a decision and also in implementing it boldly and courageously. If a leader is irresolute then he will not be able to deal with or control the changing conditions in the battlefield. There are many such examples in life where a person practices abstinence, has great faith in and fear of Allâh Almighty, but lacks self-confidence, will power and the element of firmness in the actual execution of a well thought out strategy. In other words, theoretical planning by itself is of no use unless there is practical application. A leader must have the ability to plan the strength of will to decide firmly, and then to execute the plan. A person who does not have all these three qualities cannot be a successful leader in any sphere - social, political or military.

This is why the Prophet ﷺ instructed Abu Zar Al-Ghaffari ﷺ, a weak willed person that he should never take on the responsibility of leading even two people. The onus would fall on him for any errors of omission or commission on the Day of Judgment, and humiliation, dishonour and repentance would be his fate. On the other hand, the Prophet ﷺ appointed the young seventeen year old 'Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ the Commander of an army which included such noteworthy, experienced and respected Companions such as Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما.

Courage and ambition take life from determination and a strong will; for success in a daring and dangerous enterprise this characteristic is indispensable. It is again from this trait of character that a fortified and firm faith is born. It is this element that gives continuity and a logical follow up to action. Allâh says:

"Then, when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allâh,

certainly, Allâh loves those who put their trust (in Him)."
(3:159)

Brave people always practice in every field; with firm and determined action they perform incredible and remarkable deeds. Lack of sturdy resolve makes a person act according to momentary whims and caprices, and he cannot by any means carry out the onerous responsibilities of a successful leader. Thus it is essential for a military commander or a general that strength of will be very much part and parcel of his temperament.

6. Charismatic and magnetic personality

All the qualities mentioned above pertain to the character and capabilities of the ideal commander and not to his physical appearance. But when a leader is selected it should be borne in mind that his physical attributes also have an effect on the development of his personality as a whole; besides they also affect the beholder as well as his subordinates.

In social interaction smartness in dress, good manners and a certain elegance of style play a very positive role in winning over people. In this context if one studies the personal habits of the Prophet ﷺ one sees how particular he was as regards personal hygiene, neatness and cleanliness. People would realize he had passed by a street because he left an aura of perfume behind him. Whenever he met delegations he would make it a point to dress well. Besides being cultured and well mannered a leader also has to have a fine physique. The Noble Qur'ân says:

"And their Prophet (Samuel عليه السلام) said to them, 'Indeed Allâh has appointed Tâlût (Saul) as a king over you.' They said, 'How can he be a king over us when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth.' He said: 'Verily, Allâh has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allâh grants His kingdom to whom He wills. And Allâh is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.' (2:247)

Talut was a handsome tall youth from among the Bani Israeel who

was chosen to be their king, and his good looks and his physique were considered to be one of the basic qualifications for a ruler. For leadership in the military besides a person's intellectual prowess, his physical fitness and looks should also be taken into account.

7. Eloquence

Eloquence and oratorical skills can be used to great effect to rouse emotions and feelings. To inculcate courage, to arouse ambitions and to rouse the fervour of the *Mujâhideen* to grievously wound the enemy (for all these purposes) eloquence can be used to great effect. A skillful orator through his eloquence can change the course of things, and can turn a peaceful environment into a flaming volcano. An army commander with his eloquence can inflame his men with a burning desire to go to *Jihâd*, and thus easily gain supremacy over the enemy. A trait shared by all notable generals in military history has been eloquence. A successful general before entering the battle arena always give a fiery and emotionally charged speech to his army, arousing the ardent desire for *Jihâd*, and this makes it that much easier for the men to gain victory. An appropriate and timely extempore and passionate address can have a magical effect on the men. In military schools the officers who are chosen to command are specially educated and trained in the skills of oratory, so that they can use this skill when the need arises. Every general must possess this ability.

8. Excellent arms

Every age in the history of mankind has acknowledged the vital importance and necessity for having the best available arms to equip their forces. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Verily, the strength is in archery."

This statement is valid even today in this technologically advanced age. Whichever country has the strongest arms and arsenal has supremacy over its opponent. It should be the strongest available and well organized. And for modern arms too the same skill of *Rammi* is essential. Whether it may be the napalm bomb, the hydrogen bomb or the atom bomb - all arms need to be deployed and aimed, which is the skill of *Rammi* that the Prophet ﷺ spoke about.

Intelligent and alert nations, who wish to subjugate the enemy, Should always be well equipped, well prepared and well organized.

Military preparedness and the equipping of oneself with the best possible arsenal for the purpose of inspiring awe and dread in the enemy. In the modern age when there are displays and parades of military equipment on national days and so on, one underlying purpose is to impress and warn the enemy, as it were. And if the enemy is really planning to attack, then he will be forewarned of the possible dangers and repercussions.

The Noble Qur'ân goes into this concept in very great detail. As Allâh Almighty says:

"And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (tanks, planes, missiles, artillery) to threaten the enemy of Allâh and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allâh does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allâh shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly." (8:60)

Gaining power and strength through the acquiring of war equipment and arsenals helps to impress the enemy and cow him down. The commander, in order to do justice to his position should have full knowledge regarding all kinds of equipment and have wide ranging experience regarding the use of it as well.

9. Generosity and liberality

A head of any department or establishment should be a liberal, beneficent and just person; this leads to many good results. A liberal person is universally loved and respected, and this helps him to perform his duties of leadership more easily and better. Prophet ﷺ said:

"A generous and munificent person is closer to Allâh Almighty, people and *Paradise* (Paradise)."

Philanthropy and generosity adds great dignity to personalities.

The Prophet ﷺ was extremely generous; often he would fill up the purses of the needy to such an extent that prosperity and well being

became theirs for life. It is but a fact of human nature that a generous person who benefits others is more loved and respected by others. When a general behaves with compassion, generosity and kindness with all his subordinates in the army, then it is only natural that they will love him and obey him. They will think it to be an honour to obey his every wish. Leadership and generosity are very closely bound to each other. A stingy and miserly leader will always face shame and embarrassment, and any order given by him will be obeyed with great reluctance. His men will resent him. It has often been seen that harsh, mean and miserly leader will be dispatched by his own subordinates! During the training of generals the elements of compassion, generosity and kindness should be inculcated and the advantages resulting therefrom pointed out to them. They should be able to take full advantage of this great quality in practical life and play a prominent role in the battlefield and in their military life.

10. A sense of justice and fair play

Every human being should have beautiful this life style. If all human beings behaved in a just and fair manner, society would be transformed and peace and tranquillity would prevail. Especially the head of any institution should compulsorily conduct all affairs under his administration with justice. If he is unfair he will arouse great resentment and hatred. And this will affect his practical life. The Noble Qur'an enjoins this:

"Be just: that is nearer to piety." (5:8)

Justice, impartiality, abstinence and fear of Allâh ﷺ are qualities which add radiance to personal magnetism. These are some basic characteristics which should be an essential part of the mental and physical make-up of any general. If the army training centers pay attention to the inculcation and development of these qualities the Muslim nations will be able to produce great and efficient soldiers of Allâh Almighty.

May Allâh Almighty Shower His Blessings on the Prophet
Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions!

Khâlid bin Waleed

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Khâlid bin Waleed! On the basis of your intelligence, understanding and foresight I was very hopeful that one day you would finally accept Islam.”

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ

A strong and sturdy physique, tall stature, broad shoulders, dignified bearing and eagle-eyed with a brilliant intellect, noble thoughts and firm determination this was the grand personality of Khâlid bin Waleed, one of the greatest warriors and commanders of Islamic army. He was the ideal man uniting within his personality both physical and intellectual beauty. He was the personification of nobility and majesty, and an enviable example of all the best qualities. An unparalleled rider, an expert swordsman and equally adept with the spear or any other weapon, he was noted for his courage and his foresight in planning. In the battle of Uhud, fighting from the *kuffar*, displaying expertise and valour. He scattered the forces of the *Mujâhideen*; but in the battle of Mouta, it was the very same Muslim hero whom by his brilliant strategic planning and courage, not only saved most of the *Mujâhideen* but led them to one of their greatest triumphs. The palaces of Rome and Persia trembled at his coming as he tore through the ranks of the enemy in the battlefields.

When the *kuffar* heard this fearless man's name they were shaken by a terrible and dreadful panic; his stormy attacks and victories stunned the world, and the Prophet ﷺ gave him the title of *Saifullâh*, (Sword of Allâh). He is recognized in the world's military history as one of the greatest generals of all time. Triumphs and victories used to kiss his feet and even his worst enemies acknowledged his military expertise. From his early childhood Khâlid bin Waleed was very sprightly, agile and courageous. He was the son of the chieftain of the tribe of Banu Makhzoom, Waleed bin Mughaira, and was hence everyone's favourite. In his youth the qualities of foresight and planning bloomed

to perfection, and he occupied an enviable position among the youths of Banu Makhzoom. He was blessed with a splendid graceful physique which, attracted people and was counted among the nobility. From the battle of Uhud to the battle of Hudaibia, he was the squadron leader and commander of the cavalry. After that he was irradiated by his faith in Islam. The story of his conversion to Islam makes interesting readers.

Haris bin Hisham in the 'Tabqât bin Sa'd' relates that Khâlid bin Waleed used to say that before he accepted Islam, almost in every engagement, he used to enter the battlefield challenging the Prophet ﷺ. But each time his majesty and nobility seemed to spread an aura which, seemed to enter the heart of Khâlid bin Waleed. Finally, Allâh ﷺ sowed in his heart the love of Islam. On one occasion when the Prophet ﷺ was leading the *Zuhr* (afternoon prayer) in the battlefield, with his army behind him, Khâlid bin Waleed was tempted to take advantage of this invaluable opportunity and attack the Muslims who would thereby suffer irrevocable losses. But some invisible force seemed to hold him back and he just could not muster up enough courage to do it.

Then again in the same battlefield the Prophet ﷺ led the 'Asr (early evening prayer). Again the thought came to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ that he should not lose this chance to attack the Muslim army engrossed in prayer. But it seemed as if his feet could not move; he realized that some unseen power was protecting the Prophet ﷺ and surely he would one day conquer not only whole Arabia but also, the whole world.

When the Prophet ﷺ signed the peace treaty at Hudaibiyah and returned with his Companions to Al-Madinah, Khâlid bin Waleed wondered what would follow next. He kept pondering what he should do. Should he migrate to Ethiopia? But then the thought came to him that the ruler, Najâshi, a Christian was already a follower of the Prophet ﷺ, and Muslims had found a peaceful life under his protection. Then he thought of going to King Harqul, give up his religion and become a Jew or a Christian. He thought of leaving Arabia, but all said and done it was his homeland. Should he just sit at home and give up his warrior's life? An endless stream of thoughts seemed to flow through his mind, but he just could not make up his

mind. At that momentous time he got a letter from his brother, who had converted to Islam. He wrote in very affectionate terms that the Prophet ﷺ had asked him where Khâlid bin Waleed was. He had answered respectfully that Allâh Almighty would surely one day bring Khâlid bin Waleed to the Prophet ﷺ to embrace Islam. It was not possible, he told him that his intelligent, perceptive and able brother should be deprived of the blessings of Allâh Almighty and Islam.

This message says Khâlid bin Waleed, inclined his mind and feelings even more towards Islam, and he felt very elated and proud that the Prophet ﷺ had asked about him. He felt that his fortune had taken a turn for the best possible future. During this time he dreamt that he was moving out of a tiny, dark, dingy and airless place into a vast, green fertile field. When he woke up he felt extremely pleasant and made up his mind to definitely go to Al-Madinah. He wished that he could find someone going there to join him.

He expressed his intention to 'Uthmân bin Talhah ﷺ who agreed to accompany him, and with a fervent desire to reach the presence of the Prophet ﷺ they started on their journey. On the way they met 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ. He asked them where they were going and he said he was on his way to meet the Prophet ﷺ at Al-Madinah, as he was planning to swear allegiance to Allâh Almighty and Islam. When they realized that they all were bound together by the same yearning for Islam and its True Prophet, they continued on the journey together happily. They reached the presence of the Prophet ﷺ on the first day of Safar, 8th Hijrah. Khâlid bin Waleed respectfully greeted him and was greeted by him with a smile. Khâlid bin Waleed then took the pledge of allegiance, swearing on the palm of the Prophet ﷺ. Then very affectionately he told Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ:

"I was sure, taking into consideration your brilliance, your wisdom and foresight that surely one day you would accept Islam as your religion."

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ then requested him to pray to Allâh Almighty to forgive him for all the sins he had committed with the might of his sword against Islam and for the problems he had created for Muslims.

The Prophet ﷺ assured him in gentle and compassionate tones that all

he had done as a *kafir* (disbeliever) in his days of ignorance would be automatically erased. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ replied that still he would request the Prophet ﷺ to offer supplications to Allâh ﷺ for him. Then the Prophet ﷺ prayed to Allâh Almighty, asking Him to forgive Khâlid bin Waleed all his sins, and to have Mercy on him, for doubtless He is Forgiving and Generous.

Then 'Umar bin 'Aas and 'Uthmân bin Talhah رضي الله عنهما, too stepped forward and swore allegiance to Islam on the palm of the Prophet ﷺ.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ told his dream to Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ, that he saw in a dream that I was in a tiny dark room and after that in the fertile green. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ told him:

"The narrow dark room is your life in disbelief and *Shirk* and the fertile green expanse is your life in Islam. Allâh Almighty has brought you out of the narrowness and darkness of ignorance into the radiant and enlightened fields of Islam, may this prove auspicious for you."

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ had converted to Islam, not out of fear or greed, but because he was influenced by the attractive and magnetic personality of the Prophet ﷺ. In human history forthrightness and frankness in upholding the principles of Truth has been recognized as a basic and vital quality. This is the reason why people who have the courage to speak up for what they believe to be the Truth are often extremist in expressing their views. These two positive qualities of courage and frankness are to be found in the character of the great General Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ.

Until the time that he accepted Islam he was the most dangerous enemy of Islam. In the battle of Uhud he played a major role in converting the victory of Muslims into defeat with his extremism and firmness of purpose. Since the *Kuffar* were losing they were despondent and had given up hopes of winning completely. In this

struggle between Truth and Falsehood, all the ranks of the *Kuffar* were prepared to accept defeat, except for Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. This warrior was the one who refused to cave in; the moment he got a chance he got together a troop of cavalry and through a mountainous route made an unexpected assault on the Muslim army. They were shocked and uprooted, as it were, and suffered grievous loss of lives. Yet this same brave and daring warrior, once he became a Muslim, fought at every stage with a sincerity of heart and purity of intention for the cause of the propagation of Islam to bring victory to the Muslims. He gave himself, mind, body and soul, for the great cause of the Prophet ﷺ. After his pledge of allegiance he gave the rest of his life to fighting for truth against the forces of evil, cruelty and barbarism. At the most critical of times he did not entertain the slightest degree of fear or hopelessness and despair.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ accomplished such daring exploits that the world was lost in wonder and amazement. His great deeds of daring, heroism and bravery, were acknowledged and admired by even his enemies. The Commander-in-Chief of the German army, Jeneral Aroon Rommel, was asked for the secret of his successes in warfare. He answered that he followed the tactics employed by the great Muslim general, Khâlid bin Waleed. That the greatness and majesty of Caesar was laid low in the dust by him is doubtless a miracle caused by the ingenuity and well-planned tactics used by him in leading his men. The eyes of the world saw that the mighty resources of Rome and Persia were never deterrents for him. From the beginning to the end in every conflict between Good and Evil, he remained victorious and with the help of Allâh Almighty's blessings he never faced defeat.

On the boundaries of Syria is a city called Moatah. The confrontation, which took place here, is called the War of Moatah. This is the first war in which Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ took part as an ordinary soldier after his conversion to Islam. But after three generals were martyred, one after another, the mantle of leadership fell on him. There were only three thousand *Mujâhideen* and they were totally spent and exhausted. The enemy, on the other hand, numbered two hundred thousand fierce warriors, who were very well equipped and armed. The war started due to the following incident.

The Prophet ﷺ sent one of his most faithful Companions, Haris bin 'Amr Azdi ﷺ, with a letter for the ruler of Basra, Haris bin Ami Shamar Ghassani. He had barely reached Moatah, a town in the province of Balqa, on the borders of Syria, when the Governor of the province, Sharjeel bin 'Amr Ghassani, came to hear of his arrival. He immediately had him arrested and killed brutally. When this terrible news reached the Prophet ﷺ, he was very grieved and upset. Another incident took place around the same time. A missionary group of fifteen of the Prophet's Companions was in Syria engrossed in carrying the Message of Islam and enjoining its teachings. All these Companions were in a place called 'Zât Al-Atlah', when they were treacherously murdered. Then again, around the same time the ruler of Rome had threatened to invade Al-Madinah. These were the main reasons why the Prophet ﷺ sent an army under General Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ. He had instructed that in case Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ, was martyred during the war, his place should be taken by Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. If he too was martyred then 'Abdullâh bin Rawâha ﷺ should take over the command the forces. If he too should be martyred then the *Mujâhideen* should decide on who should be their Commander. He had a white flag made for the army and entrusted it to General Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ. He commanded the army to camp at the spot where Hârith bin 'Amr Azdi ﷺ, had been martyred, ask Allâh Almighty for help and stand firm to battle against the enemy. He further instructed them not to break their word and not to perpetrate any breach of trust. They were ordered not to kill old people, women or children. Nor should they kill any recluse or monk who had abandoned the world to pray or meditate. No buildings were to be razed to the ground, nor trees to be felled or destroyed. After receiving their orders from their Commander-in-Chief, the Prophet ﷺ, the army set out on their extremely difficult mission. After crossing very difficult territory they finally reached the Syrian border and entered the province of Balqa'. Here they got the news that the Roman emperor Harqul had sent a huge army to fight these handful of Muslim soldiers, and they were already encamped in the field. So the *Mujâhideen* turned direction and marched towards Moatah. At this place the two armies confronted each other and heavy fighting broke out. The Muslims fought fearlessly and Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ the general, realizing his responsibilities as the Commander attacked the enemy. In order to

boost the morale of his handful of men, he fought with the vigour and zest of four men. There was destruction, perdition and panic all round, as he advanced plunging through the ranks of the enemy, and finally achieved martyrdom. Now Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ took command and holding the flag in his hand led the Muslim army. He too rode fearlessly, trying to break through the ranks of the enemy. Since the enemy's army was huge and the fighting was intense, it was difficult to ride through them, So he jumped off his steed and rushing through their ranks started to rip off the heads of the enemy with his sword. Finally, one of the enemy soldiers managed to land a powerful blow and cut off his right hand. He took the flag in his left hand and the enemy cut off the left hand as well. He still did not allow the flag to fall down and continued to hold it with the help of his legs and what was left of his arms. The enemy struck a final and fatal blow, and Ja'far ﷺ attained the exalted status of a martyr. According to the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ, 'Abdullâh bin Rawâha ﷺ now took over the responsibility of General. Moving forward he took the flag, and finally he too after displaying marvelous deeds of heroism reached martyrdom, and the Glorious Presence of Allâh Almighty.

The morale of the *Mujâhideen* was now at its lowest; they had lost three Generals, and even their flag had fallen to the ground. Considering the disproportionate numbers of the huge Roman army and the small Muslim force, defeat seemed certain. The white flag of the Muslim army had almost fallen into the hands of the enemy, when Thabit bin Aqram ﷺ with a dexterous move took up the flag. He then turned to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ and addressed him thus:

"Please take this flag into your hands; at this most difficult of times only you can perform the duty of a leader best."

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ in very civil and humble tones declined the honour, saying Thabit ﷺ was superior to him; having taken part in the battle of Badr he had the right to be the leader of the *Mujâhideen*, he said. But Thabit bin Aqram ﷺ was adamant and swearing by Allâh Almighty he said it was a proved fact that with his deeds of valour, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ had shown his mettle. He said he had picked up the flag from the ground only to hand it over to you. He again

requested him to hold it up and tackle the critical situation with his wise and strategic planning. The *Mujâhadeen* needed his military skill, daring and brave leadership. He said the army needed him at this crucial juncture to perform the important duties of leadership and nonplus and confound the enemy so that the Muslim forces could get some breathing space. Then turning to the *Mujâhideen* he asked them of they were would like to accept Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ as their leader. They all answered that they would be happy to have as their Commander him. Realizing that he was the choice of the *Mujâhideen*, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ picked up the flag, accepting the position of General. And he fought so fiercely and firmly that nine swords were broken in his hands and the enemy was thwarted.

Compared to the enemy the *Mujâhideen* were very few in number. Bringing experience and masterly strategy into play, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ changed the whole formation of the army. He picked out a group of the *Mujâhideen* to remain at the back in hiding, and then suddenly appear and join the rest of the army. As a result the whole atmosphere was filled with dust and sand as they moved forward. The Roman army panicked when they saw this and thought that reinforcements had arrived. Their morale started to dive down and taking advantage of this opportunity. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ started to move out the *Mujâhideen* very carefully out of the circle of the surrounding enemy, and into a safe area. Earlier the Romans had been very confident that they would decimate the Muslims, and not even one of them would be allowed to leave the battlefield alive. Their confidence was very high because in the recent past they had defeated the Persians; they were intoxicated by their victory and thought a handful of the *Mujâhideen* would be no match for them. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ with his God-given skill in planning had put into practice intelligent tactics to defeat the enemy. On the every first day they were shattered when they saw him break nine swords. And when he saw on the second day that the Romans were frightened, panicking and ready to retreat he took advantage of the opportunity to take his men back to safety. To bring back the army intact under such precarious and critical circumstances was no mean feat and unforgettable in the annals of military history.



After the conversion of Khâlid bin Waleed to Islam, the second most important event was the conquest of Makkah. In this battle the Prophet ﷺ himself formally appointed him to lead a brigade, consisting of the tribes of Banu Saleem, Banu Khazeema, Banu Ghaffar and Jaheenah, and enter Makkah from the area of Kada. He was told that if any local tribe tried to stop him he had permission to battle with them using his skill with his sword and if there was no opposition, not to start a war under any circumstances. The Prophet ﷺ said every effort should be made to enter the city peacefully without shedding any blood, and as far as possible respect the sanctity of precincts of the Haram, the House of Allâh Almighty. There were about ten thousand Muslims in the army, far outnumbering the inhabitants of Makkah. The chances were they would not dare to raise arms against the Prophet ﷺ, and the city would be taken peacefully. But then again, it went against the disposition of the Makkahns not to oppose the taking of their centre. Hence the rising youth of the city, under the leadership of 'Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl, Safwan bin Umayya and Sahal bin 'Amr, organized their troops and tried to stop the Muslims from entering the Makkah at Khandamah. The brigade they opposed happened to be commanded by Khâlid bin Waleed . When the opponents saw his feats with the sword they lost courage and rapidly fell back. In this battle twelve men of the Banu Baker and Banu Hatheel tribes were slain. Two Muslims had lost their way and reached some place else; these were the only two Muslims to be martyred. Except for these, the whole Muslim army, without any trouble, triumphantly, but peacefully, entered Makkah on Friday the twentieth day of Ramadhân, 8th Hijrah.

After taking complete control of the city the Prophet ﷺ entered the Ka'bah (the House of Allâh ﷺ), and cleansed it completely of the filth and pollution of the false idols which, had been placed there. Then with exemplary and enviable magnanimity he declared general amnesty and forgiveness for all.

1. He said who entered the Haram on that day were guaranteed safety.
2. Those who surrendered their weapons were also guaranteed safety.

3. Those who closed their doors and remained inside their houses were also safe.
4. Those who entered the house of Abu Sufyân were also rendered safe and secure.

Impressed and overawed by the majesty of Islam, Abu Sufyân had, through the mediation of 'Abbas رض managed to gain the attention of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ and pledge allegiance to the pure and noble religion of Islam.

When the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ stood at the head of the *Mujâhideen* in the valley of Zee Tawa, tears of joy filled his eyes. He remembered that this was the same Makkah from where he had been forced to emigrate stealthily in the dead of night. And on this auspicious day the city seemed to spread out its arms to welcome and embrace him and the rest of the Muslims. The very same *kuffar*, idolaters and worshippers of 'Lât' and 'Manât' who had night and day tortured and tormented the followers of the One True Allâh were now bowed down before them, pleading for mercy and forgiveness; in fact they were begging for their lives.

The very people who had besieged and starved the Muslims in the siege of Sha'ab Abu Tâlib, were on this day imploring them for kindness and mercy. Seeing this change of fortune, the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ prostrated in gratitude before Allâh Almighty.

Just five days after the conquest of Makkah the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ sent thirty men under the leadership of Khâlid bin Waleed رض to a place called Nakhlah, where the *kuffar* and *Mushrikeen* had an asylum and shrine dedicated to the idol 'Uzza. They were ordered to shatter this idol to pieces and completely destroy and raze this important shrine of the *kuffar*. 'Uzza was a very huge idol, which was worshipped with great pomp and ceremony. It was deeply revered by the fierce, fearless and warmongering tribes, Kannana and Mazar. The temple built to 'Uzza was under the protection of one of the tribes of Banu Hishâm, Banu Shaiban. It was no easy task to destroy and annihilate this fortress of

*Shirk.*¹ But Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, fired by the zeal and passionate faith in the One True Allâh ﷺ, tore the huge idol to pieces with a pickaxe, calling out:

“O ‘Uzza, I hereby declare you are a false god; there is not an iota of sanctity nor holiness in you. Allâh Almighty has today degraded and defamed you by my hands.”

After destroying the idol he set fire to it.

The Prophet ﷺ sent delegations to the surrounding areas to spread knowledge about the new religion, Islam. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was nominated to lead one of these, which had such respected Companions from the *Bait-Rizwan* as ‘Abdur-Rahmân bin ‘Auf and ‘Abdullâh bin ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. The town of the Banu Khazeemah tribe was one day’s travelling distance from Makkah. It was a well-known fact that these people had converted to Islam. When the leaders of the tribe saw some people under the leadership of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ nearing their town, they came out to the outskirts, armed. When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ saw them armed, he asked them if they had converted to Islam. They all answered simultaneously that they were ‘*Sâbi*’. This was a term used by the *kuffar* to refer to people who did not believe in any religion. The moment Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ heard this he flew into a rage and attacked them. His sword killed some of them, while others went into hiding in fear. But very soon they were flushed out and taken prisoner. The Commander ordered that they should also be killed the next day. But the Companions from the *Bait-Rizwan* such as ‘Abdur-Rahmân bin ‘Auf and ‘Abdullâh bin ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما refused to obey him, since they had learned that these people had converted to Islam and were Muslims. It is not right to raise weapons against a fellow Muslim and this unfortunate incident had resulted only because of a misunderstanding. But Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was of the opinion that if they had accepted Islam they should have said so unhesitatingly. They had used the word *Sâbi* to describe themselves,

¹ Associating any other with the One True Allah Almighty.

rather than the word Muslim, which showed they disliked Islam, and deserved to have their heads chopped off. Imam Ibn Tameemah, Allama Aini and Hafiz Ibn Hajar held the view that the people of Banu Khuzamah should have answered promptly that they were Muslims.

It is the basic quality of an efficient and good general that he never wastes time at a critical juncture; once he decides on a course of action, he tries to execute it as soon as possible. It was for this reason that once Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ heard the word *Sâbi* from their lips he thought that they did not love Islam; since no Muslim could possibly declare he was a *Sâbi*. Hence he decided on his own regarding the course of action to be taken. Because of this misunderstanding the Banu Khuzama suffered a heavy loss of life and property.

When the Prophet ﷺ came to hear of this tragic incident he was very sad, but he did not reprimand or rebuke Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. After all he had not meant to do wrong, and it was all a tragic misunderstanding. In order to make up to the Banu Khuzama for the huge losses suffered by them he sent 'Ali ﷺ with a lot of money and goods to compensate them. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ continued to have the support of the Prophet ﷺ just like before and appointed him Commander of the foremost brigades in all the later wars against the *Kuffar*.

Hunnain is the name of a valley, which is about forty miles to the northwest of Tâ'i'f, in the mountains of Uthâs. A very famous warrior-like the Hawâzan tribe, were settled here. Many offshoots of the tribes had spread out into other areas as well. They were well known for their skill in archery. They started preparing to attack the Muslims first since they feared an offensive from them. The Prophet ﷺ decided after the conquest of Makkah to punish them. Ten thousand *Mujâhideen* had come from Al-Madinah and two thousand more from Makkah joined them. In this war 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was appointed Commander of this *Muhâjireen* (immigrants). Aseed bin Huzair ﷺ of the tribe of Uws was appointed the standard bearer. Sa'd bin 'Ibâda ﷺ was appointed general of the tribe of Khazraj, and Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was given Command of the tribe of Banu Saleem. The Prophet ﷺ was the Supreme Commander of this army of twelve thousand Muslims. They reached Hunnain in the evening on the tenth day of Shawwal in 8th Hijrah.

Khâlid bin Waleed was sent with the warriors of the tribe of Banu Saleem as an advance guard. The enemy numbered only four thousand. When the *Mujâhideen* saw this they became overconfident and sure of victory. They forgot that they had won battles before against all odds because of Divine support and assistance and they thought their numerical strength alone could bring them victory. Allâh Almighty was displeased with this attitude of theirs, and they suffered reverses in the first encounter. The Noble Qur'an describes this incident:

"Truly, Allâh has given you victory on many battlefields, and on the day of Hunain (battle) when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you naught and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight. Then Allâh sent down His *Sakinah* (calmness, tranquillity and reassurance) on the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and on the believers, and sent down forces (angels) which you saw not, and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers." (9:25,26)

The skilled archers and warriors of the tribes of Banu Thaqeef and Hawâzan lay in ambush, and as soon as Khâlid bin Waleed with his advance guard came into their range of attack they rained down arrows on the *Mujâhideen*. They felt uprooted, and the enemy, taking advantage of the situation launched another strong attack; the Muslim army panicked and started to flee. Camels and horses with their riders started scampering in any which way they could. Only a very few *Mujâhideen* remained in the battlefield with their Commander-in-Chief who remained steadfast. He called out to his men:

"I am doubtless the Prophet of Allâh Almighty, I am the son of 'Abdul Mutallib!

See with your own eyes that I am standing here firm and determined, and I will not flee."

'Abbas ﷺ was also calling out to the *Mujâhideen* in a voice filled with grief:

"Where are you going? Come back to the Prophet! Allâh Almighty's Messenger is calling out to you! Turn back and return to him."

When they heard the thundering voice of 'Abbas ﷺ they turned and rushed feeling guilty and crazed with love for the Prophet ﷺ. They were shouting,

"Here we come in response to your call, O Messenger of Allâh!"

The scattered forces of the *Mujâhideen* fervently consolidated their strength and made a massive attack on the enemy. The enemy could not withstand it and were repulsed. Within seconds the whole picture of the battlefield had changed.

The great general, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, with his razor-sharp sword was tearing through the ranks of the enemy, and whoever came in his way was mowed down mercilessly. Overcome with the spirit and fervour of *Jihâd*, he was charging after his prey like a raging lion. In the marshalling of the troops he had suffered grievous and deep wounds. After gaining victory, the Prophet ﷺ visited his favourite general, whose joy knew no bounds. It was as if he had been given a huge treasure gathered from all the continents. Filled with happiness at the visit he blessed his stars, and said that his injuries were lucky since they were being looked at by his beloved Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ smeared his auspicious spittle on the wound which then healed quickly.

After gaining victory in Hunnain the Muslim forces were encamped in the battlefield, resting and nursing the wounded. The Prophet ﷺ got news that some of the defeated soldiers had gathered in Tai'f. This city is located in a valley between two mountains, about sixty miles from Makkah, and is a cool and fertile place. It grows plenty of fruits, which are famous for their fresh and sweet flavour; especially the grapes and pomegranates are so sweet that the like of these can be found nowhere else in the world. I have had occasion to visit Tai'f three times. It is a beautiful scenic place, with a cool climate and clear fresh and salt water streams. I have also enjoyed the fruit to be found there on these occasions, especially the pomegranates and grapes.

This is the very same city which the Prophet ﷺ had visited during the Makkahan era for the purpose of addressing its people and inviting them to pledge allegiance to the new religion of Islam. The people had in no way been hospitable and in fact the dissolute youth of the city

had wounded him by pelting him with stones. They had chased him as he was bleeding from the injuries caused by them. Exhausted and spent he had been forced to take refuge and rest in a garden. Seeing this heartrending spectacle -Messenger of Allâh bleeding and worn out - the angels of the mountains had asked for his permission to crush and grind the city and its inhabitants between two mountains of the valley.

But the Prophet ﷺ had denied permission and said that he was not in favour of destroying and ruining the people of Tâ'i'f since he hoped that their future generations would accept Islam. It is an irony of fate and a twist of fortunes that the very same True Prophet ﷺ who had left the city bleeding and helpless, was now back as the Commander-in-Chief of a huge force to overpower with his majesty the Banu Hawâzan and the other tribes who were its sworn friends. In spite of the fact that he was injured Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was appointed General of the Banu Saleem. When the Banu Hawâzan saw the grandeur and majesty of the tremendous Muslim army, the Banu Thaqeef and they fled into their fort. The *Mujâhideen* besieged the fort. Emotionally charged with the passion for *Jihâd*, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ kept calling out continuously to the enemy to come out and meet the challenge. But none of them had the courage to come out and face him. And they had collected so much food and water that they could have easily lived in the fort for a year. Seeing these conditions, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ advised that the siege be called off. The Prophet ﷺ approved of this idea and the siege was finally lifted after eighteen days. Soon after this the Banu Hawâzan and the Banu Thaqeef accepted Islam. During this encounter Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ by his challenges to the enemy gave ample proof of his courage, faith and devotion to Islam. Doubtless these are the qualities of a good General.

The tribe of Banu Mastalaq was a branch of the Banu Khaza'a. The people of this tribe had accepted Islam in the fifth or sixth Hijrah. The Prophet ﷺ sent a representative to collect *Zakat* or the poor due from them. When he reached there the leaders of the tribe came to the outskirts of the city to welcome them. When the representative saw these people approaching him, he panicked. He thought they were going to kill him, and turned around and fled. At Al-Madinah he told

the Prophet ﷺ that the Banu Mastalaq had refused to pay *Zakât*. And this news stunned the Prophet ﷺ. Before engaging in a war with them directly he thought it was better to send Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ at the head of a delegation to ascertain the truth of the matter. His selection of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was based on his qualities of valour, wisdom and his perceptive understanding and foresight.

He advised Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ against being hasty and taking any emotional decision on the spur of the moment. He warned him that patience and forbearance were the need of the moment.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ reached the city of the Banu Mastalaq in the middle of the night. To understand and assess the situation and get the facts right, he sent out some of his comrades in disguise. They came back and reported that the people were certainly Muslims as they had themselves seen them attending the *Fajr* (dawn) prayers in the mosques, of which there were quite a few in the city. The call to prayers was also given regularly from the mosques. He was very happy to hear this and felt at peace regarding the citizens and their wellbeing. When the sun had risen high, he himself went into the city and met the chieftains of the tribe and asked them why they had not paid the *Zakât* to the representative of the Prophet ﷺ. They stated the facts of the case. They said they had gone to the city outskirts to greet him, but without meeting them he had suddenly turned round and fled. They said they themselves were very upset and surprised and they had already sent a delegation to meet the Prophet ﷺ and inform him regarding what had occurred. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ himself was very astonished to hear this, and left having satisfied him that all was well with the religious beliefs and faith of these people. Upon reaching Al-Madinah he informed the Prophet ﷺ regarding what had actually taken place; he said these people of Banu Mastalaq were blameless and had not refused to pay *Zakât*. The representative had given a totally incorrect picture of the situation. Allâh Almighty revealed the following Verse on this occasion:

"O you who believe! If a *Fasiq* (liar evil person) comes to you with a news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done." (49:6)

What is worthy of note is that when the incident of the Banu Mastalaq refusing to pay *Zakât* and getting ready for war against the Muslims was reported wrongly, the person the Prophet ﷺ entrusted with the task of resolving the issue was Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. It shows the trust the Prophet ﷺ had in his ability to utilize his God-given gifts of intelligence and wisdom and in his ability to arrive at a farsighted and courageous decision. He had advised his General to be calm and patient because he felt that Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ might get enraged, act in haste and God forbid, cause irreparable damage. This had been the case with the Banu Khazeema.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ came back triumphant from this war. His majesty and power were such that the enemy used to start trembling when they heard his name. The Muslims, on the other hand, gained strength from having him among them. Under his leadership they gained victories and triumphs whichever way they turned, and the flag of Islam flew high in many countries. The power and might of the empires of Rome and Persia was laid low. No doubt Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was in a very exalted and lofty position.

Tabuk is a valley about six hundred and eighty-six miles north of Al-Madinah. In the intense heat of the year 9th Hijrah, the Prophet ﷺ after an arduous journey over difficult terrain, reached there commanding an army of thirty thousand Muslim *Mujâhideen*. He saw that in this land where water was scarce, a tiny bit of water was oozing. He ordered that some water should be collected in a small vessel for his ablution. He then washed his face and hands, and the rest of the water he threw back into the place from where the water was oozing out. The moment the water was thrown by him, a stream of water came gushing out with a thunderous sound. The *Mujâhideen* had felt as if their bodies were cracking under the strain and the severe heat. At such a time to find a plentiful supply of water was a blessing. The whole army drank their fill, gained strength, and offered there thanks to Allâh ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ told Mua'âz bin Jabl:

"If he lived long enough he would see many fertile and green gardens at that spot."

His prophecy turned out to be true, word for word. The miraculous stream gave plenitude and fertility to the land, and even today this is one of the greenest and most fertile of areas, serene and soothing to the eyes. The stream made Tabuk one of the most beautiful place still flows continuously. It is now known as the Fountain of Tabuk, and people visit this historic site to see the stream and enjoy themselves.

The Prophet ﷺ had marched Tabuk at the head of an army as a trading caravan from Syria had informed him that the Emperor of Rome was making elaborate preparations to invade Al-Madinah. Many Arab tribes had joined hands with him to wipe out the Muslims from the face of the earth. In fact, they reported, he had already set out for Al-Madinah and his advance guard had reached the border area of Balqa, in Syria. The Prophet ﷺ immediately ordered the Companions to prepare for *Jihâd*. Since it was summer and it was to be a very long journey, he ordered that a lot of luggage and food should be prepared to be carried along for the journey. He wanted immediate action in order to stop the enemy at the earliest in his own territory. Among the thirty thousand troops of the Muslim army was ten thousand cavalry. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was made Commander of the advance guard. Talhah bin 'Abaidullah ﷺ was the Commander of the right wing, and 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ was the Commander of the left wing. The Muslim army camped at Tabuk for twenty days, but the Roman army did not dare to come out and face them. Emperor Harqul of Rome sent his spies to find out the strength of the Muslim army and the extent of its preparedness and organization. What he heard frightened him and he thought it best to turn back with his troops. Though no actual fighting took place at Tabuk, two great advantages were gained.

- The King of Syria was highly impressed by the might and majesty of the Muslims.
- Taking advantage of the almost three-week long stay at Tabuk, the Prophet ﷺ sent emissaries and delegations to different tribes in the surrounding areas to spread the message of Islam. The *Mujâhideen* also built a mosque at Tabuk. As a result of this missionary work many chieftains converted to Islam. Many Christian chieftains also were overawed by the majesty and strength of the Muslims and presented them before the Prophet ﷺ to sign treaties of peace and reconciliation.

The Prophet ﷺ appointed Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ as Commander of a group of five hundred *Mujâhideen* to conquer the chieftain of the Doamtha Al-Jandal, Akeedar bin 'Abdul-Malik. He told him that he would find him hunting and wanted him to be brought to him alive. Riding their fast Arab steeds, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ and his men reached Doamt-ul-Jandal at night. The Commander instructed his men to talk in whispers and see that their horses too trod very softly.

The whole atmosphere was still and silent. Akeedar bin 'Abdul-Malik was relaxing with his wife, drinking wine. Suddenly a white antelope appeared out of the jungle and started beating its head against the doors of the fort. His wife told him that his favorite prey had come to his doorstep, and he should not lose the chance and hurry up. He put down his glass of wine and getting up quickly, picked up his bow and arrows. He called out to his brother Hassân and some servants to join him. Leaping on to his horse, he dashed out of the fort to chase his prey. He had hardly moved a few yards, when Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ and his companions surrounded him. He had set out after his prey, but had now become a prey himself. His brother, Hassân, tried to put up some resistance but was killed. Akeedar surrendered and was taken alive to the prances of the Prophet ﷺ. He did not take any revenge, but magnanimously forgave him and fixed a tax, allowing him to live in peace as the ruler of his province. When the chieftain of the Doamt-ul-Jandal appeared in front of the Prophet ﷺ, he was wearing a very expensive silken robe richly embroidered with gold and jewels. When the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ saw this expression of arrogance and pride they expressed surprise. The Prophet ﷺ told them not to be surprised, as even the handkerchief of Sa'd bin Ma'az in Paradise would be much more expensive and better than this robe.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was not only a triumphant General, but he was also very successful and effective as a preacher of Islam, achieving excellent results. In the month of Rabiul-Awwal in the year 10th Hijrah the Prophet ﷺ sent Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ at the head of a group of four hundred Companions to the valley of Najrân. He was instructed to invite the Banu Hâris tribe who lived there, to accept Islam. The

Prophet ﷺ told him that if they accepted Islam he should live there to teach them the Noble Qur'ân and the *Sunnah*. If they rejected Islam he should declare war on them.

When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ reached Najrân the first thing he did was to speak to the people eloquently about Islam and invite them to come into its fold. He exhorted them and said that it was better for them to accept it; if they did not, no power in the world could save them from disgrace and dishonour. If they listened to him there was prosperity for them. His tone was very persuasive and powerful and it seemed as if the valley was struck dumb. The people of the valley trembled in fear for their future and all of them accepted Islam.

Throughout the life of the Prophet ﷺ, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ performed his nonstop - the work of converting people to Islam and also fighting wars in the cause of Islam. Never did he slacken or show any apathy, weakness or cowardice. After his conversion to Islam, practically in every war he fought under the command of the Prophet ﷺ. Invariably he was appointed General of the advance guard; this shows that all through his life the Prophet ﷺ trusted him and had faith in him. And when the Prophet ﷺ left this ephemeral world he was very happy with the exploits of his favourite *Mujâhid* and General, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. This is such a great honour that all the world and its wealth, the medals and rewards given by governments are as nothing in comparison. Only the very fortunate have received the honour and blessings of the Prophet ﷺ.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who was the blessed for all the Universes finally reached his Maker after leading a very full and complete life, at the age of sixty-three. In their intense grief and sorrow his Companions felt deserted and forsaken; it was as if the heavens had fallen apart.

'Umar Farooq ﷺ was so emotionally shaken that he could not accept what had happened. He went around with his naked sword threatening to kill him who dared say that the Prophet ﷺ has died. At

this critical juncture Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ played a historic role by leading the wrought up Companions in a wise and rational manner and organizing things. Some people had turned away from Islam after they heard of the Prophet's passing away. These were the people of weak faith who found it difficult to follow the teachings of Islam and the restrictions imposed by it. Actually they had no love for Islam, Allâh Almighty or for His Messenger ﷺ. There was still a certain impurity and foulness in their natures. Because they did not have knowledge of the teachings of Islam, they still had the tendency to associate others with the One True Allâh. This was the reason why when they heard of the Prophet's passing away they turned their backs on Islam and its teachings. Some of them refused¹ to pay the Zakât. First Aswad Ansi and Musâlemah Kadhdhâb, then Taleehah and Sajjah - all mischief-mongers and trouble makers - claimed to be prophets. The true Muslims were very disturbed by these happenings. On the one hand was their stark grief at the loss of the greatest leader of mankind and everyone's friend and guide, on the other was the difficult choice of finding a successor or caliph for the Prophet ﷺ. Added to this was the problem of the apostates and of those who were making false claims to being prophets of Allâh. There was only darkness and gloom on all sides. At this time of despair it was Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ who, displaying courage, daring and wisdom, determined to overturn this boiling bubbling pot of wickedness and evil.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ sent Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to conquer and lay low Taleehah bin Khawaled and Malik bin Naweerah. 'Ikrimah ﷺ was given the task of conquering Musailmah Kaththâb. He sent Mohajir bin Abi Umayyah ﷺ to oppose Aswad Ansi. He ordered Suwaid bin Maqrâن ﷺ to fight a war against people of Tahamah, and 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ was sent to tackle Qadhâ'ah.

Among the above mentioned generals Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ had the distinction of using his skills to first defeat Taleehah bin Khawaled.

¹ Loving worldly wealth to such an extent that even Allah Almighty's command meant nothing to them! (Translators note)

This low man had declared himself a prophet as soon as he heard of the Prophet's illness. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ reached the destination and decisively defeated Taleehah bin Khawaled and his supporters. Then he moved on towards Natah to tackle Malik bin Naweerah.

The tribes of Asad, Ghatfân, Tai, 'Abas and Banu Theebân had, on the basis of common Arab ancestry and affiliations accepted the claims of Malik bin Naweera to being a prophet and had started following him. Defeating him was no ordinary feat, but the great General, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, exhibiting remarkable daring, courage and military expertise succeeded in routing him. Before the battle began the tribe of Tai had been persuaded by 'Adi bin Hâtim to withdraw, and this helped the Muslim army enormously.

After this Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was summoned to the headquarter of the Caliphate in Al-Madinah. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه, then sent an army consisting of both *Mohâjireen* and *Ansar*, under the Command of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to fight against Musâleemah Kaththâb. Before this, both Sharjeel bin Hasanah and 'Ikrimah رضي الله عنه had been defeated by Musâleemah Kaththâb. When the latter heard that Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was setting out to fight with him he also brought an army of forty thousand men into the battlefield. Both the armies fought fiercely but Musâleema's army was very determined and stubborn, and refused to give an inch. Realizing this, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ planned a new military strategy. He divided the army into groups based on their tribal affiliations, and appointed a Commander for each group. He told them that they had to do their utmost, and he would watch out for the each group, which was retreating or advancing. Challenged thus, each tribe put its heart and soul into the struggle. The army of Musâleemah Kaththâb started losing ground and they were repulsed, and finally tried to find refuge in a walled garden. As soon as they got into the defensive wall of the garden, they closed the gates in order to protect themselves. The wall was very high and it was not possible to jump over it; the door was very strong and almost unbreakable. Barâ' bin Malak رضي الله عنه, seeing the given conditions, emotionally charged as he was with the spirit of *jihâd*, told his companions to throw him across and over the wall, into the garden. When this agile, energetic and fearless *Mujâhid* fell

swaying into the garden, Musâleema's men were panic-stricken. They thought that a calamity or perhaps a fiend had descended from the sky. The sprightly Barâ' managed to cut through their ranks and reach the heavy door and open it. The moment the door opened the Muslim army, triumphantly chanting '*Allâh-Akbar*' (Allâh is the Greatest) charged on the enemy. Fierce fighting broke out and Musâleemah was killed with a thousand of his men. The garden was strewn with the bodies of the dead men and this garden came to be known as the 'Garden of Death.' After having gained victory in this war the Muslim army decided to rest and relax for some time in the beautiful valley of Yamâmah.

During their stay here Khâlid bin Waleed got orders from the Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq to conquer Iraq and Iran. With this objective in mind he set out for Iraq with his army of twelve thousand soldiers. He had received orders on the twelfth day of Moharram in the year 11th Hijrah to attack the low-lying province of Ablah. On reaching there Khâlid bin Waleed first of all sent a letter to the ruler of Ablah, Harmaz. These historic words were written in the letter,

"O Harmaz! Accept Islam, or accept the government of Islam and start paying tax. Otherwise you will be forced to face a people who love death just as much as you love life."

The only effect it had on Harmaz was that he asked the Empire of Iran for a huge army to assist him; the Empire's army immediately set out to help him. The Muslim *Mujâhideen* under the command of Khâlid bin Waleed numbered eighteen thousand. When the two armies came out into the battlefield to face each other, Harmaz arrogantly stepped out, clapping his breast proudly. But with the first stroke of his sword Khâlid bin Waleed finished him. His army panicked and was uprooted when they saw their Commander killed even before the battle had got under way. The *Mujâhideen* won and gained huge spoils of war. They also got the heavily embroidered and bejeweled cap of Harmaz. The Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq, gave the cap, which was valued at a hundred thousand dirhams, to Khâlid bin Waleed. Wherever this great hero turned in Iraq, he was blessed with victory.

In all the battles - the Battle of Dhât-us-Salâsal, the Battle of Walja, the

Battle of Alees, the Battle of Amgheeshiya, the Battle of Haira, the Battle of Anbâr, the Battle of 'Ain-ul-Tamar, the Battle of Haseer, the Battle of Khanafas, the Battle of Maseekh, the Battle of Zameel and finally, in the Battle of Faraz – in all of the battles fought within the borders of Iraq, the Muslim army gained victories. Khâlid bin Waleed رض spent altogether two years in Iraq, and fought fifteen wars. In spite of the fact that the Muslim army was smaller and had less arms and equipment compared to the enemy, they triumphed in all the encounters. In a short period of time they won victories which the greatest of Generals have not been able to win to this day. Some useful information is provided herewith on the battles mentioned above.

The Battle of Dhât-us-Salâsal

This was the first battle fought by Khâlid bin Waleed رض in Iraq. It is also known as the Battle of Hafeer. Hafeer is located in the Gulf of Persia. It is located on the road, from Al-Madinah towards Basra. The ruler was Harmaz, who was very much under the influence of the government of Iran. He was the arrogant man who had worn the cap embroidered with diamonds and other precious stones and estimated to cost one hundred thousand dirhams. Among the spoils of war was an elephant, which was sent by Khâlid bin Waleed رض to Al-Madinah. The people of this city had never seen such an animal before and all the people, young and old – men, women and children – turned out to see this strangest of Allâh Almighty's creations.

Khâlid bin Waleed رض marched with his ten thousand *Mujâhideen* towards Iraq; he had barely reached the borders when Mathna bin Hârithah رض, joined him at Jalu with a company of eight thousand more men. The Commander-in-Chief, Khâlid bin Waleed رض, divided the army into three division. He appointed Mathna bin Hârithah رض the Commander of one division, and 'Adi bin Hâtim At-Tâi Commander of another section, and took charge of the third division himself. All the three groups faced the enemy. Harmaz organized his men into two divisions – left and right – and appointed princes of the royal family to command them. The men were bound to each other with chains, so as to remain firm in the battlefield. In Arabic the word

Salâsal means chains, and that is why this battle got its name.

The battle began and the enemy advanced towards Khâlid bin Waleed. Usually in war of this nature only two men confront each other, and the two armies wait for the outcome patiently. But Harmaz had conspired with his people and told them that as soon as Khâlid bin Waleed came out to confront him, they should attack him suddenly and unexpectedly. When the companions of Harmaz moved forward with the intention of attacking Khâlid bin Waleed, Qa'qâ'a bin 'Amr, impassioned with the spirit of *jihâd*, attacked him so that he lost his balance. Some of the enemy killed and the rest ran away. Khâlid bin Waleed attacked Harmaz so successfully that he died instantaneously. The Iranian lost a large number of men in this battle; the rest of the army fled and the *Mujâhideen* pursued them right up to the bridge on the River Euphrates.



The Battle of Alees

Alees is the name of an area located between Haira and Ablah on the banks of the River Euphrates. The Arab tribes settled in Iraq had planned with the Iranians to fight the Muslims. They were inflamed against the Muslims after having been defeated by them time and again. As soon as Khâlid bin Waleed reached Alees he attacked them. With his very first blow he slew the famous heroic rider, Malik bin Qais. Seeing this the enemy forces terrified. Food had been prepared for the enemy, but they did not get a chance to eat it. Filled with fear, and worried for their safety and their lives, they left everything in the battlefield and fled. There was white handmade bread called '*Chapati*',¹ with which the Arabs were not familiar. They had seen it for the first time. In this battle almost seventy thousand enemy soldiers were slain.



¹ Chapathis are made of wheat dough; they are rolled out into a round shape with a rolling pin and roasted lightly on a griddle.

The Battle of Hairah

Hairah used to be the capital of Iraq. In order to control the Arab tribes it was necessary to take complete control of Hairah. So the great tactician and strategist, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, marched towards it. He took the sea route, as it was located on the borders on the River Euphrates. When the governor came to know of the advance of the *Mujâhideen* towards Hairah, he sent a huge number of warriors under the command of his son to oppose them. He wanted to stop the vanguard of the Muslim forces before they even reached Hairah. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ slew the son of the governor in the combat. It was a very critical time for the governor; his son had been killed and his ally, the empire of Iran, was dead. Terror stricken, he shut himself up in his fortress with his men. Hairah had some very strong, grand and well-constructed forts, which could be used when necessary for self-protection. The *Mujâhideen* besieged the fort and the siege lasted for one day and one night. Some of the *Mujâhideen* managed to get into the fort and the people of Hairah agreed to sign a peace treaty. The following conditions were agreed upon:

- The people of Hairah would pay annually a tax of one hundred and ninety thousand dirhams.
- They would spy on Iran for the *Mujâhideen*.
- The *Mujâhideen*, on the other hand, would not raze or destroy their places of worship, nor would they harm anyone.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ decided that this would be an appropriate time, opportunity and place to rest, and stayed on in Hairah for a year. In order to organize the very huge surrounding areas, he spread out troops in all directions under experienced generals like Dharâr bin Azwar, Qa'qâ'a bin 'Amr and Mathna bin Hârithah رضي الله عنهم. Thus, the standard of Islam was to be found flying everywhere in the area.



Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ sent some of his greatest generals such as, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh, Yazid bin Abu Sufyân, Amir Muawiyya bin Abu Sufyân and 'Amr bin Al-'Aas رضي الله عنهم, with military troops to capture the land of the Romans. They had won battles in four different

territories of Syria. But, taking into consideration the difficult situation, they had all gathered on the shores of the river Yarmook. When Caesar, the Emperor of Rome had heard about the coming of the Muslim army, he had advised his council of ministers and generals to avoid war. But all of them had said unanimously that they would fight firmly against the Muslims and teach them a lesson, which would not be forgotten by even their future generations. So the Romans entered the battlefield with two hundred and forty thousand men; the Muslim army had only forty-six thousand *Mujâhideen* who were all split into different divisions. Each of these, under different Generals camped in scattered areas of the arena.

When Khâlid bin Waleed reached Yarmook and saw the situation, he called a meeting of all the different leaders, and presented a strategy to them. He suggested that on each day a different leader would lead all the combined forces; thus each of these generals would get the privilege of command. The enemy would be overawed and impressed when they saw the unity and cooperation of the Muslims, and would not dare to oppose the Muslims. Everyone approved of the plan, and for the first day of battle all of them accepted Khâlid bin Waleed as the Commander of the united army. As soon as he gained command of the army he gave a stirring speech to the men, which aroused their passions for *jihâd*. It was as if he had instantaneously injected and transferred his own fervour into the hearts of the men.

He addressed them thus:

“O *Mujâhideen*! This is a memorable day. It is the day on which our faith will be tested and tried. Today we should avoid every kind of arrogance, pride and not contend for individual glory or egoistic bragging.

O *Mujâhid* of Islam! Fight only to gain the Goodwill of Allâh Almighty. In the Muslim army today there are many great generals; each of them is worthy and can be entrusted with the permanent command of this army. Today you have assigned to me this honour of commanding the Muslim army. So I hope that for the honour and victory of Islam, today we will enter the battlefield of *Jihâd* as one. Allâh will be our Supporter and Defender.”

Both the armies confronted each other at Yarmook. The Roman General, Mahan, scornfully addressed his counterpart, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, and said:

“It looks as if poverty, nakedness and starvation has compelled you to come here. If you wish I am willing to give each of you ten dinars, expensive clothes and good food. You can take these things and leave. Next year too I can send you these things; you do not have to take the trouble to come here.”

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was enraged on hearing these scornful and arrogant words, and answered.

“Mahan listen to me very carefully! You are mistaken about the reason why we are here. We are people who drink the blood of our opponents. We have heard that Roman blood is very delicious, and we have come here to enjoy it.”

Saying this he spurred his horse on. Waving the flag of Islam, he shouted out ‘Allâho Akbar!’ and ordered his troops to attack the enemy. Brimming with the turbulent emotions of *Jihâd* and with a desire to achieve martyrdom, he addressed his men.

“Companions! Advance! The cool breezes of Paradise wait to welcome us, and triumph and glory are waiting for us.”

Hearing these fervent words of their leader, the *Mujâhideen* fell on the Romans in a massive attack. Confused and bewildered they did not know what to do. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was enthralled by the spirit of *Jihâd* and the desire for martyrdom; he waded through the enemy lines right into the centre, reaping the harvest of destruction. On the very first day Rome had lost one hundred and twenty thousand men.



The spirit of the *Mujâhideen*, their ardour and their craving for martyrdom was something to be seen. One of them, came to Abu ‘Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah, and told him that he had decided to die for Islam and asked him if he had any message for the Prophet ﷺ. He told him to tell him that Allâh Almighty had fulfilled all the promises he had made to the *Mujâhideen*. ‘Ikrimah moved by the same spirit said

that even before accepting Islam he had never run away from the battlefield and he would not do it now when facing the enemies of Islam. He called on his companions to advance with the desire for martyrdom in their hearts. Tearing through the lines of the enemy he went right into the middle. Encircled by their swaying swords he was martyred in a moment and reached his destination – heaven. The battle continued the whole night and before dawn Khâlid bin Waleed had reached the tent of the commander. The Romans were beginning to flee and facing a disgraceful defeat were fast retreating. The *Mujâhideen* had been tearing the enemy to pieces the whole night and some of them too had received deep wounds.

During the Battle of Yarmook an extraordinary incident of brotherhood, sympathy and sacrifice took place. Three severely injured *Mujâhideen* were gasping for water, exhausted and parched with thirst. One of the other *Mujâhid* ran and fetched some water and gave it to one of them. He had hardly reached for the bowl, when he lifted up his eyes and saw his companion in the same position as himself. He said he may be suffering more deeply and asked that the water be given to him first. The second *Mujâhid* saw the third one gasping with thirst and preferred that the water be given first to his friend, and did not even touch it. When he ran to the third *Mujâhid* his soul had thrown off its mortal coil, and flown to Paradise. When he ran to the second one he had already passed on to Paradise, and so also the first thirsty *Mujâhid*. So none of them, in their love for the others had died without quenching their thirst. Such a proof of sacrifice and brotherhood is unparalleled in human history.



There is another very interesting anecdote associated with the Battle of Yarmook. A Roman General by the name of Jarjah asked Khâlid bin Waleed if he would answer his question truthfully. Khâlid bin Waleed answered that he would certainly do so.

He asked if his Prophet had received a special sword from heaven and given it to him, because his opponents always seemed to meet with defeat.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ said that he had certainly not received any sword from heaven.

Jarjah then asked him:

"Why are you called *Saifullah* (Sword of Allâh ﷺ)?"

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ said it was because Allâh Almighty had sent a Messenger to guide them. Some of the people had sworn allegiance to him and loved him with their hearts and souls and obeyed him implicitly; others had rejected him and chose to oppose him and his teachings. He, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ himself had been one of his worst enemies. Then Allâh ﷺ had inclined his heart towards Islam, and he had sworn allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ in person and joined the band of Muslims. On one occasion, addressing him, the Prophet ﷺ had said:

"Khâlid you are the sword of Allâh Almighty which has been made to annihilate the *kuffâr*."

Thus he came to be known as *Saifullah* (the Sword of Allâh). Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ said they were preaching the unity of Oneness of the One True Allâh and inviting others to worship Him Alone.

The Roman asked if a person pledged allegiance to Islam could he also earn reward from Allâh and reach the status of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ answered that he certainly could; in fact he could even be in a higher position. Moved deeply, the Roman said he wanted to swear allegiance to Islam and its Prophet ﷺ.

Following the guidance and instructions of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, he bathed and purified himself and read the words of acceptance, or the *Kalimah*¹ of Islam, and two *Rakah* of supererogatory prayers. He bid farewell to his army and joined the *Mujâhideen*. This Roman General now fought as an ordinary soldier under Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ for the honour and love of Islam, and gained martyrdom.

¹ The *kalimah* accepting Islam - "None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and Mohammed is His Messenger."

After coming into the fold of Islam he had had time only for those two *Rakah* of prayer; how fortunate he was that his end was blessed as a Muslim.

The great General, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, who struck terror in the hearts of enemies was lying on his deathbed in Hammas. He was weeping copiously and saying that he had always wanted a martyr's death, and had fought in so many wars, hoping to achieve his ambition. There was no joint in his body, which did not carry a scar of an arrow or of a stab given by the enemy's sword. But he expressed his sorrow that he was dying in his bed and fate had not given him the golden robe of a martyr. As he said these words his soul left the mortal body and soared up to his Maker. When the Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ heard the news of his passing away he was grief-stricken and when he heard that he had left only his weapons and his horse, he said that Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was a truly great man.

'Umar Farooq ﷺ during his caliphate had dismissed Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ from his command. When he had received the letter of dismissal, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, like a true soldier of Islam, had relinquished his position without any arguments. And like a true soldier, he willingly and gladly agreed to fight for Allâh ﷺ and Islam as an ordinary rank and file soldier. This willing acceptance added a golden unforgettable chapter in history.

The fact is that he spent his life like a great general and a faithful soldier. As result of spending his whole life in battle against the enemies of Islam, his body had become like an axis for all kind of wounds and pains. After his death he spent the first day of peace and comfort in Paradise. When his funeral cortège was leaving the house his mother wept and said that her son was undoubtedly braver than a lion, and more bountiful than a river. He defended the *Ummah* (nation of Islam) the way a lion protects its cubs. She prayed that the Mercy of Allâh ﷺ should always shelter him. Her heartfelt prayer for him was that in the Hereafter he should find peace, comfort and tranquillity. He had always given her happiness and she prayed that he should get happiness in the Hereafter.

When 'Umar Farooq رض heard what his mother had said, he said she was right in all respects. When the body of Khâlid bin Waleed رض was lowered into the grave, all the Companions had become silent with grief. The weeping of his horse, Ashqar, whose tears were rolling down his cheeks, broke this all-pervasive and prolonged silence. The Companions were amazed at this expression of grief.

Khâlid bin Waleed رض, the great General of Islam had died in Hamas in the year 21th Hijrah, and was buried there. He had lived an enviable life and went to meet His Creature very peacefully.

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah

Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

“Every *Ummah* has a trustee; the trustee of my *Ummah* is Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ”

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض

A handsome, pleasant, well-spoken man with a tall, slim physique and bright sharp eyes, he was an image of dignity and grace. These were his physical good looks. By character and nature he was humble and modest. Among his friends he was gentle and soft as silk; when it came to a war between good and evil he was as hard as iron. He had lost his two front teeth in the Battle of Uhud. Two of the iron links of the Prophet's helmet had pierced his head and he had pulled them out with his teeth. He was unparalleled for his integrity and honesty among the Companions and the Prophet ﷺ had given him the distinguished title of 'Trustee of the *Ummah*'.

His real name was 'Amir bin 'Abdullâh bin Al-Jarrah, but he became famous as Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض. 'Abdullâh bin 'Umar رض says that among the tribe of the Quraish there were three personalities whose appearance, mien, manners and modesty excelled all others. They also had the gift of eloquent and gentle speech. If people looked towards them they wished to keep on looking. In his opinion the three people were:

- Abu Bakr Siddiq رض
- Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض
- 'Uthmân bin 'Affân رض

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض was among those very first distinguished Companion who had accepted Islam. He pledged allegiance to Islam just the day after Abu Bakr Siddiq رض, who had invited him to accept it.

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf, Arqam bin Abi

Arqam, 'Uthmân bin Madh'oon in the company of Abu Bakr Siddiq رض went into the presence of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ and recited the pledge:

"None has the right to be worship but Allâh and that Muhammad is His Messenger."

Doubtless these great people who were the foundations on which the castle of Islam was constructed.

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض passed every trial and test with flying colours. The difficult situations created by the Quraish were met with courage, patience and fortitude. During this period of hardships and sufferings they remained constant and firm. Every single moment they sincerely and honestly recognized the authenticity and truth of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ as the Messenger of Allâh. They never give any sine of despair or hopelessness; the test that was faced at the Battle of Badr was so critical that it is beyond human comprehension.

What happened in the Battle of Badr, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah advanced, tearing his way into the middle of the enemy ranks. This bold move of his created havoc and the enemy started to run helter-skelter. He was going around fearlessly in the middle of the enemy as if death was of no consequence and there was absolutely no danger. His casual attitude frightened the Quraish. As soon as he came face to face with an enemy on horseback, the man would give way to him. But there was one man among them who would stand in front of him to challenge him and try to attack him with his sword. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض would try to avoid him and retreat. But the man would insist on coming face to face to oppose him, and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض would always give him free passage and get out of his way. During the battle a stage came when the man had him trapped. There was no way that Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض could turn to avoid him; he could neither move towards the front nor could he move back; all avenues were closed to him. Absolutely ensnared, he was forced to attack him on the head with his sword; his skull broke into two and in a moment he lay dead at his feet. Can you guess who this slain man could be? Doubtless the trial of faithfulness faced by Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض was extremely critical, few people

are forced into such a situation. When he realised that the dead man was his father he was stunned.

The fact was that the man he had killed was to all appearances his father, but in reality it was the standard-bearer of evil he had killed. Fulfilling this exemplary role he had made it clear that in the balance it was Allâh Almighty and His religion of Islam which outweighed all other considerations and even familial bonds. The love of Allâh عز وجل takes priority and is superior to all other bonds. Every moment the objective is in sight and of paramount importance (the glory of Islam). If something comes in the way it has to be chopped off; if a mountain is an obstacle it has to be surmounted; if there is a river in the way the waves have to be cut through with powerful strokes to reach the friendly shores. The sword of Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض did not chop off his father's neck, but it chopped off the face of 'Kufr' and one who associated others with the One True Allâh. This exploit of his pleased Allâh عز وجل so much that the following Ayât were revealed:

"You (O Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ) will not find any people who believe in Allâh and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ), even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred (people). For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with *Rûh* (proofs, light and true guidance) from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow, to dwell therein (forever). Allâh is pleased with them and they with Him. They are the party of Allâh. Verily, it is the party of Allâh that will be the successful." (59:22)

What better fate could one ask for than praise for one's deeds in the radiant Verses revealed in the Noble Qur'ân? No doubt, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض received this enviable honour. As long as this world exists the Noble Qur'ân will continue to be read, and the *Mo'mineen*¹ will give life and spirit to their determination, courage and faith.



¹ True believers - believers in word and deed.

The fighting was at its most intense in the Battle of Uhud. The sound of the clanging of swords was deafening, there was so much shouting and yelling that one's hair stood up on end. Both armies were equally matched. And then the enemy began to retreat, and the Muslim forces chased them right up to their tents; the archers too leapt down from their positions. Khâlid bin Waleed surrounded them and the rest of the enemies too turned back. At this stage in the battle Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was in the front ranks and surrounded, but realising that the Prophet ﷺ was in danger and breaking through the dangerous encircling enemy cordon, he reached him. The Prophet ﷺ was lying down bleeding from his injuries and cleaning up the blood from his wounds. He was saying sorrowfully:

“How can those people prosper who have bloodied the face of their Prophet, though all he was doing was to invite them to their Creator and Sustainer?”

Painting a picture of this painful scene, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ says:

“The Prophet ﷺ was injured in the Battle of Uhud. A couple of links from his own helmet had pierced through his forehead, which was bleeding. I ran towards him, and then suddenly, what should I see but a friend running towards him from the east. He reached him before me, and I saw that it was the self-sacrificing Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. He requested that I should give him the honour of removing the links of the helmet. Then with great care, but at the same time with great force he held on to the links with his front teeth. He pulled out one link, but lost a tooth in the process. Then without bothering about the pain he must be suffering, again he held on to the other link with his teeth and exerted force. As the other link came out, he lost another tooth as well. Thus two of his teeth were sacrificed, but his beloved Prophet ﷺ was relieved and found comfort. It seemed as if he looked even more handsome and graceful than before with the loss of his two front teeth, because it was all done for love of his Prophet ﷺ. All the other Companions of the Prophet ﷺ used to look at him with envious eyes. There the only criterion for judging the worth of a person was the extent to which he was willing to sacrifice himself for the Prophet ﷺ.

In 7th Hijrah, the Prophet ﷺ conquered Khaibar. On this occasion Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was also present with other noteworthy Generals. He had set an example for others with his daring and valour in this battle. After winning this important battle the Prophet ﷺ sent Muslim forces to a place called Salāsal in the valley of Al-Qara; they were sent under the command of 'Umar bin 'Aas ﷺ to vanquish the tribe known as Qada'a. After examining the battlefield he sent a request to the Prophet ﷺ for reinforcements. These were sent under the command of Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ, and included such respected Companions as Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما. On reaching Salāsal the debate arose as to who should take command of these joint forces. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ, displaying extraordinarily good manners, declared that he would fight under the Command of 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ. He thus proved that a loyal companion and Companion of the Prophet ﷺ did not fight for the power of being in command; he entered the battlefield for the true glory of Islam. How can a person whose objective is martyrdom be greedy for leadership in this world?

In 6th Hijrah, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was appointed commander of a troop of three hundred men to track down and report on the movements of trading and military caravans of the Quraish. He had to travel along the coastal areas to complete this assignment.

The only food the troops had was a small quantity of dates. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was very careful and rationed these out to his men very frugally. It was a time when the men got only one date and they had to live on this. Finally even this meagre supply of dates was finished. They then had to extinguish the burning pangs of hunger by eating the leaves of trees and drinking water. *Khabat* means 'leaves' in Arabic and this was the name given to this battle, which came to be known as the Battle of *Khabat*. Allāh Almighty finally had Mercy on His *Mujāhideen* and since their movements were along the coastline, they were able to find a giant fish. Thus they had a feast provided by Divine Providence for some days. Allāh Almighty never disappoints those who have complete trust and faith in Him; there are periods of trial and tribulation, but after such every ordeal comes

relief; and after every difficulty there is ease. For every difficulty there is a doubled comfort. When they got such a meagre supply of dates for three hundred *Mujâhidîn* there was not a word of complaint. They had absolute faith and trust in Allâh Almighty and His Messenger. The depth of their belief in Allâh Almighty gave them the certitude that the being who had created them would also provide for them; the Almighty Allâh for Whose cause they had stepped out into the battlefield would provide ample means of sustenance for them, and He did provide something which had never even entered their minds.

The Prophet ﷺ loved Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه, his self-sacrificing Companion, deeply and often gave him preference over others. In the year 9th Hijrah delegation from Yemen came to meet the Prophet ﷺ. Instead of accepting Islam they wished to pay the *Jazyah*.¹ They very respectfully requested the Prophet ﷺ that he should send someone trustworthy with them. When he heard their request he said he would send with them a person whom he trusted deeply and who would fulfil his obligations and his duty. This sentence he repeated three times. Each of the Companion present who heard this very complimentary sentence repeated by his beloved and respected Prophet ﷺ, wished he would be the one chosen to fulfil this trust.

'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه says:

"I had never deeply wished to occupy any position, but when I heard this sentence repeated by the Prophet ﷺ, I wished that I should be the object on whom this praise was showered. I hurried for the noon prayers to the mosque. After having led the prayers, the Prophet ﷺ looked to his left and to his right. I stretched my neck in order to attract his attention. He kept glancing at all the people who had assembled for the prayers. Finally, his eye fell on Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه. He called him and told him to accompany the delegation and do what was just and right in fulfilling the contract with them."

¹ A tax levied on disbelievers under Muslim rule in place of *Zakâh*.

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ went with the delegation to Yemen and according to the instructions received from the Prophet ﷺ, fulfilled his duty. The laudatory sentences, the phrases of praise expressed by the Prophet ﷺ became his life-savings for Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. This was a unique honour for him, not shared by any of the other Companions.

In the wars of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Banu Quraidhah, and in the battles of Salâsal, Dimashq, Fahal, Hamas and Yarmook and in many other less important battles, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ proved his courage and daring. He was present at the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah; in fact he was one of the signatories to it. He also accompanied the Prophet ﷺ on *Hajjaht-ul-Wida'a* (the last pilgrimage).

When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, the Companions were heart-broken and lost. Every one of them had tears in his eyes and felt as if he was adrift and rudderless. The question was who should be the next Caliph was a very big problem. At this critical juncture Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ played a very significant role, in trying to calm down both the *Ansâr*¹ and the *Muhâjireen*.² Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ addressed all the troubled Companions and said that they had the choice. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was among them; the Prophet ﷺ had said about him that Allâh Almighty had given predominance to Islam through him, then there was Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ had said that every religion has a safe-keeper, and that Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was the repository of the Muslim *Ummah*'s trust. He asked them to choose any one of them, but both these distinguished Companions move forwards and pledged allegiance to him.

Seeing this all the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr* also crowded around him and swore allegiance to him; all differences were resolved, and everyone breathed a sigh of relief. Thus, in a very simple yet well-planned manner he resolved a situation which was of critical significance for the *Ummah*. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was known to be a very successful General, but he was also known as a perceptive diplomat

¹ Original inhabitants of Al-Madinah.

² The migrants from Makkah.

and skilful negotiator who could find peaceful solutions for potentially violent and problematic situations. This was the reason why advantage was taken of this dexterity and skill of his in difficult situations to the very end of his life. The Prophet ﷺ gave him the title of *Amin-ul-Ummah* (Trustee of his *Ummah*), Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه offered him the first Caliphate and 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه said he would have made him Caliph if he had been alive.

After conquering the famous key city of Hamas in Syria General Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه, leading the Muslim army, moved on. He appointed 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit رضي الله عنه to look after Hamas. All the settlements on the way were conquered. Lazaqiah was a fortified town, this was besieged but it did not look like it would be easy to conquer it. Here the master strategist, General Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه planned a different modus operandi which amazed both friends and enemies. He ordered the *Mujâhideen* to dig trenches in the open fields near the city. Once this was done he ordered his troops to end the siege. When the siege was lifted and his army withdrew, the people of the city were overjoyed. They thought all their problems had been solved. When the army withdrew and was no longer visible the people came out of the city. The whole day there was the usual hustle and bustle in the town, doors were left open and people kept moving in and out of the town. As soon as the sun set, the doors of the city were closed. He then asked his men to hide in the trenches they had dug, taking advantage of the darkness of the night. When morning came the doors of the city were opened and the people of the city went about as per their routine, moving in and out of the city. Suddenly the *Mujâhideen* came out of the trenches and entered the city and very easily conquered it. On the battlefield digging of trenches is today an accepted part of military strategy. It was Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه who first introduced these tactics in a battle.

Yarmook is the name of a river, which meets the river Jordan and about thirty miles further up the river Yarmook makes a circle and flows on. From here it flows into a huge plain. The famous war that was fought here during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه came to

be known as the war of Yarmook. It was the Roman army, consisting of two hundred thousand men, which fought here against the much smaller force of the *Mujâhideen* consisting of forty thousand men only. When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ reached here after a very long and tedious journey from Iraq, he was worried to see the scattered forces of the Muslims under several different leaders. Among them were different troops under Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ, Yazid bin Abi Sufyân, Sharjeel bin Masana and the fourth one under 'Amr bin 'Aas رضي الله عنه. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ gathered everyone together and addressed them sorrowfully. He said that the enemy had entered the field very well-prepared and also outnumbered them by several times. If they opposed him, divided into so many groups, they had no hopes of winning. In his opinion they should agree to hand over the command each day to a different leader; thus the Muslim army would present a picture of unity, oneness and understanding, and move rapidly towards victory. The command on the first day could be handed over to him, and one by one the other four could take over on the following days. The whole army was relieved and happy to hear this. After having been given command on the first day Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ trained the *Mujâhideen* in the light of his experiences. The two armies faced each other and there was very heavy fighting. The Romans lost more than a hundred thousand men on this very first day. The clanging of swords and the shouts and screams of the men could be heard from all sides. The *Mujâhideen* were busy trying to wipe out the Romans, and advancing under the leadership of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, when a messenger arrived from the capital, Al-Madinah with a hand written message which he gave to Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. He put it in his pocket and did not tell anyone about it. When the Muslims had won convincingly and Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, was standing in the field as the victorious General of a victorious army, he handed over the message very respectfully to him. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, was deeply moved as it carried the news of the passing away of Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ. He said:

"To Allâh we belong and to Him we return."

Further he was informed that 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was the new Caliph, and thanked Allâh Almighty for this. After this he read the shocking

news that he had been removed from his command and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ had been appointed Commander of the Muslim army. He immediately handed over command and expressed his willing desire to fight under him as an ordinary soldier and said:

"Abu 'Ubaidah, may Allâh shower His Blessings on you; why did you not tell me as soon as you received the letter?"

The *Amin-ul-Ummah*, Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ replied:

"He did not like to disturb him in the battlefield and stop his advancing steps. We do not want the power of this world, neither do we work for this world. We are all brothers in working to please Allâh Almighty."

Displaying exemplary patience and fortitude in this situation, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ proved that the training and nurturing of the Prophet ﷺ had left very deep-rooted and pleasant effects on him. He was not affected or elated by having been given command of the army. His heart had only one desire - the glorification of Islam. And Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ too did not have any regrets that the command was taken away from him. Certainly this again was due to the education and training imparted by the Prophet ﷺ that a race, which had been the most uncivilised was affected and influenced so deeply by him.

After the conquest of Damascus Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ informed the Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ that the people of Damascus were very eager to see you and wanted to present you the keys of the city. As soon as he heard this 'Umar Farooq ﷺ set out for Syria. He asked the people waiting to receive him about the whereabouts of his brother. The people were surprised and asked him, who brother was. He answered that he was asking about Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. Then they pointed out that he was just approaching. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ went forward and embraced him warmly and then accompanied him to his house. When he saw the very austere lifestyle of Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ he was very surprised. There were no worldly goods in the house, nothing but his weapons - a sword, bow and arrows, and his saddle. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was amazed that a man of such high status had chosen to live such a simple life. He said:

"Abu 'Ubaidah, it is very surprising that even though you have been appointed to such a high office, you have not made anything for yourself."

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ answered that what he had was sufficient for him. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ answered that this was exactly what he had expected from him, that he would remain true and constant to the norms of trustworthiness.

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ remained loyal to 'Umar Farooq ﷺ during his entire Caliphate and co-operated with him. Except in one instance he never disobeyed him. Can you guess what was this one instance when he disobeyed him?

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was performing his duties of commanding the Muslim forces in Syria and conquering vast territories very rapidly; the whole of Syria had been conquered and Islamic empire had spread far and wide and graph of victories was at its peak. What transpired was that at this time the fatal disease of plague spread in the city, as it never had before. People were effected prey to it very rapidly. When 'Umar Farooq ﷺ came to know of this he sent a messenger with a letter for Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. He wrote in the letter that he had some important business with him, and wanted him to make preparations and immediately set out for Al-Madinah to meet him. He was not to delay; if the letter reached him at night, he should set out before morning; if it reached him in the morning, he should set out before night fell.

When Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ read the letter he said sorrowfully that he knew what was the urgent and important work that 'Umar Farooq ﷺ had for me. He wanted to keep alive a man who was not born to live in this world forever. Then he wrote a letter to the Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ. After greeting him he said he knew what work he had for me. He was in the Muslim army and at that time the Muslims were involved in severe problems; he could not leave them alone at that critical phase, nor could he separate himself from them, unless it was Allâh Almighty's Will to decide about their fate and his. He appealed to the Caliph to consider him helpless to obey his commands in this matter and requested him to give him permission to stay with the *Mujâhideen* of Islam.

When 'Umar Farooq رض received this letter and read it his eyes brimmed with tears. The Companions sitting around him were surprised to see this and asked him if here was some tragic news, and if the Commander of the Muslim forces, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض had died. He answered:

"No, but death is very near him now."

And his guess turned out to be correct. A few days later Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رض was struck by the deadly plague.

In his last days he made the following dying statement to his armed forces:

"Today I am giving you some advice; if you accept you it will find peace and security to be your companions:

- Establish *Salât*, be regular in your prayers.
- Fast during the month of Ramadân.
- Give sacrifices and be charitable often.
- Perform the *Hajj*.
- Perform *Umrah*.
- Encourage and instruct each other to do good actions.
- Wish your rulers well and be loyal to them.
- Never deceive your rulers.
- Be careful that you perform your duties and are not lost in worldly pursuits.
- Listen carefully to what I have to say next. Even if a man gets to live to be a thousand years old, one day he will be in the same position in which you see me today. No one can escape death.

My greetings of peace to all of you; may there be countless Blessings of Allâh the Merciful on you all."

Then he turned to Mu'âdh bin Jabl رض and said:

"Lead the men well in prayers. Allâh Hafiz."

And with these words on his lips he passed away.

“To Allâh we belong and to Him we return.”

Mu'âdh bin Jabl  stood up and told the people with quivering lips and a trembling voice:

“Brothers in Islam! You are sunk in grief today for a man who was a more good hearted than any of us. He had a pure heart free from malice or envy; and he was a man who loved the Hereafter and was the well-wisher of each one of us. He was a man who was given the title of 'Amin-ul-Ummah' and during his very lifetime on this earth he was given the glad tidings that he would go to Paradise by no less a person than the Prophet  himself. He was a very lucky man indeed! Let us all pray that his position in Paradise ever exalted. May Allâh  shower his Blessings on Him.”

Sa‘d bin Abi Waqâs

Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

“Sa‘d! shoot your arrows, May my mother and father be sacrificed for you.”

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ

A tall tanned sturdily built youth with broad shoulders and curly hair he was a picture of devotion to Allâh Almighty. He led a austere and pure life, kept awake at nights in worship, and was courageous and yet forbearing. A God-fearing man he was generous, humble and self-sacrificing. This fortunate Companion had received the glad tidings that he would go to Paradise, from the lips of the Prophet ﷺ himself. He had also prayed to Allâh Almighty that the supplications of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ should be answered and that his arrow should always find its mark. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs had been a member of the group of Companion who had pledged loyalty to Allâh ﷺ and His Prophet ﷺ at what came to be known as the *Bai'at-Rizwan*. These Companions are mentioned in the Noble Qur'ân, and Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was one of them. He was one of those brave soldiers who took part in the Battle of Uhud and were known for their fearlessness. In this battle this experienced archer had rained his arrows on the enemy and the Prophet ﷺ had been so pleased with him that he said to him:

"Sa'd shoot your arrows; May my mother and father be sacrificed for you."

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ became a Muslim at the age of seventeen. He was educated and trained in the *Dar Arqâm*¹ and was with the Prophet ﷺ

¹ Arqaam was the name of a Companion. The newly converted Muslims used to meet secretly at his house to study the teachings of Islam. They were forced to meet in secret because of their persecution by the Qurash. (Translator's note)

at the Shi'ab Abi Tâlib,¹ bearing with patience and fortitude the difficulties and hardship of the siege. The whole of his life was spent displaying his prowess and achieving amazing exploits in the battlefield. Every moment of his life deserves study by the Muslims of today and especially the youth in the military.

In the famous place called Jâr in Iraq he opposed the Iraqi army. They came on to the battlefield looking very warlike and arrogantly clapping their breasts. There was very heavy fighting and the attack of the enemy was so very forceful and severe that four thousand *Mujâhideen* were martyred in a single day. The Caliph, 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was very sad to hear this tragic news, and decided to go to Iraq and lead the Muslim army himself. He ordered that 'Ali ﷺ be put in charge of affairs at the capital, Al-Madinah, and with some *Mujâhideen* reinforcements set out for Iraq. When 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ came to know that 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was on his way to Iraq, he was very upset and set out to stop him. He caught up with him just a short distance from Al-Madinah and persuaded him not to leave the capital, as the situation was critical. He tried to convince him that his presence was essential in the capital, as the Muslims were facing a difficult and delicate situation. The Muslim *Ummah* needed his services very badly, and there were plenty of experienced strategists, and courageous lions, who could be sent to crush the *kuffar*. He suggested it would be better to entrust the military leadership to an experienced and fearless General. These arguments convinced 'Umar Farooq ﷺ and he summoned 'Ali ﷺ and some other prominent Companion to a meeting; they all agreed that 'Umar Farooq ﷺ should return to the capital, and an experienced commander be chosen to lead the Muslim forces in Iraq. Giving in to the collective opinion of the Companions, 'Umar Farooq ﷺ returned to Al-Madinah. Once there he called another meeting of the Companion to advise him on the choice of a General. He asked them to suggest the name of a heroic general who

¹ The Muslims (men, women and children) were besieged in the house of Abi Tâlib in Makkah. It was a very difficult time and the siege lasted three years.

could be sent to command the armed forces to tackle this dangerous situation. All the Companion started considering various possibilities, when 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ suddenly called out that he had got just the right man; upon being asked for the name by 'Umar Farooq ﷺ, he said the best man to handle the situation would be the lion-hearted youth, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ. The entire Companion were happy to approve of his choice. And 'Umar Farooq ﷺ sent Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ to Iraq as Commander of the Muslim forces.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ, the great General, was the cousin brother of the Prophet's mother, Âminah. Once when he came with some of his companions into the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, he very proudly told those present that he was his uncle and asked if anybody had a better uncle, they should introduce him.

After pledging allegiance to Islam in the flower of his youth and receiving his education and training in Dar-ul-Arqâm, he had the privilege of being among the first distinguished Companion to accept Islam. Among those to be influenced by the teachings of Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ were 'Uthmân bin 'Affân, Zubair bin 'Awam, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf, Talhah bin 'Abdullâh and Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رضي الله عنه. These first Companion, in order to escape the persecution of the Quraish used to hide in the deserted areas near Makkah to pray. On one occasion he was in a secret hiding place with some of his companions absorbed in meditation and prayer, when some mischievous and rowdy elements spotted them. They started to scornfully jeer at them. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ picked up the bone of a camel lying nearby and threw it forcefully like an arrow. It hit one of the boys on his forehead and blood spurted out. Panic-stricken they all fled, stumbling and tumbling against each other. This was the first courageous step taken by Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ in support of Islam to cow down its enemies, and it was a very effective step.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was a man who possessed many great qualities, but there are two special traits of his character which make

him stand out among the others. The first one is that when the Prophet ﷺ saw his marksmanship in the battle of Uhud, he was so impressed and so happy that he wished him to continue his good work and said even his parents could be sacrificed for him. It is certainly a great honour which distinguishes him from others. Another good quality was that he was blessed with the ability to pray to Allâh ﷺ and have his supplications answered. The Prophet ﷺ had prayed to Allâh ﷺ that He should grant acceptance to the entreaties of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رضي الله عنه. After this whenever Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رضي الله عنه prayed to Allâh Almighty, his prayers and supplications would be answered. All other Companion used to value him highly.

The whole of Arabia had heard of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رضي الله عنه, the warrior known for his courage and daring. There was no enemy he had taken on and not vanquished. He had two weapons, which made him invincible – the arrow and his supplications to Allâh Almighty. He never missed his aim with his arrows. In the Battle of Uhud he came face to face with a foe who was spreading terror among the ranks of the Muslim army. The Prophet ﷺ ordered him to aim his arrow at the man, but his quiver was empty, as he had exhausted his supply of arrows. And he had to obey the orders of the Prophet ﷺ, so he started looking around the battlefield for some fallen arrows. After a long search he found an arrow, the back part of which was broken off. Anyway he picked it up and aimed it at the enemy. It struck him on the forehead and he fell down and died. Similarly he found another arrow lying on the ground. He picked it up and aimed it at the neck of another foe. It got stuck in his throat and his tongue came out, his neck got ripped and he too met his fate. His faithful comrades say that on one occasion the Prophet ﷺ prayed to Allâh ﷺ to keep his aim perfect and to accept his supplications.

It was a well-known fact that the prayers of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رضي الله عنه were like a sharp sword and were always answered.

His son narrates how one day he heard a man grumbling; when he listened closely to what he was saying he realised he was abusing 'Ali, Talhah and Zubair رضي الله عنهم. He told him to stop, but he would not

listen and continued. Finally, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ lost his temper, and said if did not control his tongue he would put a curse on him. Arrogantly the man told him that he was arrogating powers to himself and he asked him if he thought he was a Prophet ﷺ. Listening to the man's bitter words, he merely turned away. He went, made his ablutions for prayers and offered two supererogatory units of prayer. Then he entreated Allâh Almighty:

"O Allâh you know that this man is abusing men of purity, with whom You Yourself are Pleased because of their goodness. Surely You will not approve of these abuses. May this man be a lesson for such other men."

He had barely done with his supplications when people saw that a raging she-camel had broken away from the rope which tethered her, and leaving her home had entered in the midst of a crowd of people. It seemed as if she was looking for a particular person. In seconds she had the head of a person in her bloodthirsty jaws and was shaking it violently from side to side. Finally his neck broke and in no time he had become the prey of death. People were stunned into silence. The dead man was none other than the one who had been abusing the noble Companions a few minutes earlier, and against whom Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ had appealed to Allâh ﷺ. He had indeed become a lesson for all people. There is no doubt that if any person abuses the loyal sacrificing Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, Allâh ﷺ will make them object lessons for others. He meets such a terrible fate that onlookers beg for the mercy of Allâh Almighty. Surely the love of the Companion is the precursor of the love for the Prophet ﷺ, and the love of the Prophet ﷺ is the precursor and proof of the love for Allâh Almighty Himself. Whoever resents and hates and nurtures enmity with these pure-hearted men is sure to become the prey of destruction and devastation in Eternity. Whosoever expresses love and affection for them will be twice blessed - now and in the Hereafter.

May Allâh ﷺ fill our hearts with love for these celestial and sacred souls who thought it an honour to give up their lives at a mere signal from the Prophet ﷺ; and on the Day of Judgement may he raise us among them.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ had a pure soul, firm faith and perfect sincerity. Right through his life he tried that his earnings should be from sources permitted and declared 'Halal' or pure by Allâh Almighty. If he doubted the source of even a small sum he refused to accept it. He was a very wealthy man and owned a lot of property. He left a very large estate upon his death. When the Prophet ﷺ went on his Farewell Pilgrimage, he accompanied him and happened to fall ill. When the Prophet ﷺ went to nurse him, he told the Prophet ﷺ that he owned a lot of property and had only one daughter who would inherit it. He said that he wished to give away as charity in the Name of Allâh ﷺ two-third of it. The Prophet ﷺ told him this was too large a proportion. Then he asked if he could give away one half, the Prophet ﷺ said even this was too much. Then again he asked if it would be all right to give away one third.

The Prophet ﷺ said even this was a bit too much though it was all right. He asked him to remember that it was better to leave one's heirs in a good financial position; it was not good to leave them in a situation where they would have to around asking others for help. Allâh will reward the person who spent anything at all in charity for Him.

The sickness of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was getting more and more complicated day by day. He loved Al-Madinah deeply and he wanted to die there. When the Prophet ﷺ saw his restlessness and desire to be in his favourite city, he put his blessed hand on his breast and supplicated to Allâh Almighty thrice to cure him.

These supplicated phrases uttered by the Prophet ﷺ acted like a magic cure for Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ. He got well and lived to a ripe old age. His exploits in the cause of Islam are numerous. Because of his military exploits the Arabs won many victories and the barbarian disbelievers faced defeats.

During this same illness, the Prophet ﷺ had predicted that Sa'd would not die until he had benefited one race of people and caused harm to another. This prediction turned out to be a hundred percent correct. The non-Arab people suffered badly by him and the Arabs gained a lot of advantages. After he recovered from his illness, he made many time married and had about thirty-four sons and daughters.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ used to weep copiously out of fear of Allâh ﷺ. Whenever the Prophet ﷺ gave a sermon his eyes used to fill involuntarily with tears.

One day when the Prophet ﷺ was sitting in the company of his Companion, he looked up at them and said they were soon going to be joined by a *Jannati*.¹

The entire Companion kept looking around expectantly to see whom this fortunate man could possibly be, about whom the Prophet ﷺ was giving this glad tiding. And soon Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ appeared, and everyone started looking at him enviously and continued staring at him.

This was the man whose supplications were answered, pure of tongue, pure of heart and soul and a great warrior. In all the battles in which he took part with the Prophet ﷺ, at Badr, at Uhud and at many others he had proved innumerable times his daring, his bravery, his steadfastness and heroic qualities. These exploits fill golden chapters of our history.

'Umar Farooq ﷺ was very impressed by the strength of his faith and the firm and truthfulness. He could never forget that incident which depicted the degree of his devotion to Islam. He had accepted Islam as a young boy; this disturbed and saddened his mother very deeply because he had given up the faith of his fathers and forefathers. She tried in many ways to bring him back into the fold of *Kuffâr*. When nothing worked she used the last resort of mothers to emotionally blackmail her obedient and loving son. This is something, which makes their determination falter and their resolutions fail. She went on a hunger strike and declared she would not eat until her son came back to the religion of his forefathers. She vowed that rather die than see her son become a Muslim.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was unnerved when he saw her stubbornness, but pure faith had taken strong roots in his heart, so his strong feet,

¹ A person who was destined to go to *Jannah* (Paradise).

firmly planted in Islam, did not totter. His mother was close to death by starvation and thirst. Displaying strong determination and courage he said to her:

"Dear mother if you had a hundred lives within your body, and each one of those hundred lives were to leave your body in front of my eyes, even then I would not recant and give up my faith in Islam. It is your wish whether you want to eat or not; as for myself, I will not leave my Prophet ﷺ."

Seeing that it was of no use and her son was stubborn as a rock, she finished her hunger strike. This resolution and determination of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ؓ has been made immortal:

"But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do." (31:15)

For the Battle of Qâdisiyah, 'Umar Farooq ؓ appointed Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ؓ Commander-in-Chief of an army of a hundred thousand experienced, fearless and courageous *Mujâhideen*, but he selected only thirty thousand of the most formidable from among them. They carried weapons in their hands and their hearts were filled with the radiance of their faith and the burning desire to be martyred for Allâh ﷺ and Islam. At Qâdisiyah both the armies clashed and fought. During the battle Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ؓ received a letter from 'Umar Farooq ؓ in which he said:

"Remember the importance of Qâdisiyah, which is a historic place. If the battle is won then the whole of Iran will be at your feet. Qâdisiyah is the central door to Iran. Do not be lost in arrogance because you are related to the Prophet ﷺ. Do not forget that one's status and position in the eyes of Allâh ﷺ depends on one's obedience and loyalty to him. Allâh Almighty is the Supporter and Sustainer of all and you are his slave. Keep

your eyes focused on the mission of the Prophet ﷺ, which he bequeathed to us when he left this world."

At the end of the letter he told him to keep me informed about all the latest developments. How would he enter the battlefield? Where would he camp? At what distance was the enemy at that time? In other words, he wanted detailed information about what was taking place every moment, as if he were able to see him.

Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ, fulfilling his duties, kept the government at the centre informed regarding every detail to the extent that he kept Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ informed in exhaustive detail about the welfare and activities of each *Mujâhid*. He also wrote to him regarding the individual and collective assignments given to each *Mujâhid*.

Iran also mustered an equally strong force and commoners and reached Qâdisiyah; no similar incident can be found in their history prior to this. The two armies met at Qâdisiyah posturing proudly. Iran's famous and dangerous General, Rustam, was commanding his men. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ wrote to 'Umar Farooq ﷺ that Rustam had come with a very well equipped army and gigantic elephants could also be seen. An equal number of civilians had also accompanied them into the battlefield and it looked like it was going to be a very tough encounter. Under these circumstances he was waiting anxiously to know how they should advance.

'Umar Farooq ﷺ replied that he should not fear and let the Iranians enter the battlefield. He should remember always that total power lay in the control of Allâh Almighty. He should concentrate on entreating Allâh Almighty and offering supplications to Him for assistance and depend on Him every moment. Secondly, send a delegation consisting of the most excellent, most experienced, most intelligent and most eloquent *Mujâhideen* to the Iranian Empire. They should talk to him about Islam and invite him to pledge allegiance to it. He wanted Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ to report to him in detail about how the delegation was received by the Iranian Empire; further it was extremely important that he be kept fully informed about each and every

development. Finally he prayed that Allâh Almighty be his Supporter and Helper.

Following the orders of 'Umar Farooq رض, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض selected the most eloquent, diplomatic, skilled, perceptive and dignified people from those serving under him to form the delegation and sent them to the Iranian Empire. The delegation went to the court of the Empire in the very simple attire of those who are indifferent to worldly pomp and show.

Looking at their simple dress yet regal and majestic manners the whole court seemed to tremble and quake. The head of the delegation addressed the Iranian Empire and said that Allâh Almighty had selected them, so that they should take out mankind from the filthy morass of idol worship and guide them to the clear fountain of the adoration of the One True Allâh. He wanted them to lead people from the darkness of ignorance to the brilliant light of knowledge. The common man had to be freed from the oppression of tyrants and taken into the fresh open air of Islam to enjoy the blessings of the justice of Islam.

All those who accept this invitation would be welcomed and nor would their territories be annexed. They would be given total control of the organisation and governance of their lands. But if anyone opposed them and refused their invitation, then they would declare war against them, and this war would continue until the Law of Allâh Almighty was established on this earth and His Promise was fulfilled.

The Iranian Empire asked in amazed tones:

“What Allâh Almighty had promised them?”

They answered that He had promised them Paradise after death and an exalted status for those who lived on. And very proudly they added that if he did not accept Islam this land of his would very soon be under their control, he would lose his throne and crown and all his pomp and power would become a story from the past.

The Iranian Empire felt that each phrase of theirs was a poisoned

arrow hitting the target – his heart. With smouldering eyes and a thundering voice he called out to his man. The man came forward and asked what was his command.

He asked him to go out and get some soil immediately. The man went out and quickly brought a basket filled with soil. Contemptuously he threw it at the delegation. Asim bin 'Umar picked up the basket put it in his robe and took it to Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ, and said:

“Congratulations! The Iranian Empire has himself given us his land.”

The delegation informed Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ of all that had transpired; they said that war could not be avoided as the Iranian Empire would understand no other language. The dispute could be settled only in the arena of war. The eyes of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ filled with tears when he heard the courageous dialogue of his *Mujâhideen*. He wished this war could have started some days earlier or some days later.

The fact of the matter was that when the delegation declared that war was inevitable, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was sick. He had sores all over his body and he suffering from sciatica. It was very difficult for him to walk or even to sit down. And as for riding, it was just impossible. He was in a dilemma and just did not know what to do. Suddenly it occurred to him that he should never have used the words 'if only' or 'I wish'. The Prophet ﷺ had told Muslims never to use these words. As soon as this thought came to his mind he stood up with a renewed fervour and addressed his army passionately, quoting the following Ayah:

“And indeed We have written in Az-Zabûr [i.e. all the revealed Holy Books — the Taurât (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), the Psalms, the Qur'ân] after (We have already written in) *Al-Lauh Al-Mâhfûz* (the Book that is in the heaven with Allâh) that My righteous slaves shall inherit the land (i.e. the land of Paradise).” (21:105)

After the address he led the army in the noon prayers. Then the army got ready and the men armed themselves. Famous poets and popular

orators started delivering speeches. This roused the men's passions. The famous orator Hatheel Asadi said:

"O companions of the great General Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ!
Make your swords your forts and become lions in opposing the
enemy; when your swords get blunted use your arrows.
Remember where the arrow makes its own way, the sword
becomes helpless."

Scenes of passion and enthusiasm could be seen on all sides. The famous *Qârees*¹ were reciting the *Âyât* from Sûrah Anfâl and Sûrah Taubah relating to *Jihâd* and spurring on the *Mujâhideen*. The listeners hearts were shaken to the core by these *Âyât*. When their fervour had reached its highest point, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ shouted '*Allâhio Akbar*' and asked the *Mujâhideen* to fall upon the enemy. Following the tradition of those days before the whole army fought, the warriors came out to fight on a one-to-one basis. The fighting started. A very strong youth of the Iranian army, wearing an armour made of silk came out to the battlefield. To oppose him 'Amr bin Ma'di Karb came out. The Iranian took careful aim and shot his arrow, but 'Amr dodged it and rode his horse hard and fast towards him and in seconds his sword with a clean powerful stroke cut off the enemy's head, which rolled far away. As was the tradition many individuals now confronted each other, one by one, each one displaying his skill and mastery.

Finally both the armies came out on the battlefield and intense fighting broke out. Iranians brought their elephants. The horses of the *Mujâhideen* started to panic and rear up in fear when they saw the elephants. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was sitting in the terrace and watching these painful proceedings. When he realised that if things continued in the same way it would be disastrous for the *Mujâhideen*, he ordered young men of the tribe of Asad to show their mettle. The great General of the tribe of Asad, Talihah trying to inspire his men saying:

"Advance O youth of Banu Asad, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ has

¹ Trained people who recite the Noble Qur'ân.

called you acknowledging your greatness. Today is a test of your military experience and courage; get ready to sacrifice your lives for the glory of Islam and to confound the enemy. Move forward and clash with the mountainous looking elephants. With a kick from your feet even mountains have been known to crumble."

The youth of Banu Asad steeped in the passion of *Jihâd*, with spears in their hands, attacked the elephants. Even the gigantic elephants could not stand up against their bravery and resoluteness of purpose. First they rained arrows on the soldiers riding on the elephants, who fell off their mounts like ripe fruit from trees. Some of the youth cut off the trunks of the elephants with their swords; this caused a stampede among the elephants rapidly retreated in panic-stricken terror, crushing their own army. Some few *Mujâhideen* lost their lives, but the victory on that first day belonged to the Muslim army.

This first encounter in the Battle of Qâdisiyah helped to impress the enemy with the might and power of the Muslim army.

When the sun rose the next day the bodies of the martyrs were buried and arrangements were made for treating the wounded. The *Mujâhideen* were ordered to form ranks for the battle. Before the actual fighting began the reinforcements sent by Abu 'Ubaidah reached the battlefield under the Command of Hishâm bin 'Utbah. Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr was the commander of every advance guard. At first the individual warriors of each army came on the battlefield. The experienced commander of the Muslim army, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr, slew the commander of the Iranian army, Behmen. And the famous warrior of the Iranian army, A'wan bin Qatbah was also killed.

The most excellent heroes of the Iranian army were slain. When the fighting was at its most intense, and both sides were attacking each other furiously, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr, in order to startle the horses of the enemy, draped his camels with black robes and let them loose on the battlefield. The horses, on seeing this terrifying scene, went on a rampage and could not be controlled by their riders. There was total chaos, and shouting and screaming in the enemy ranks.

Action on the battlefield was at its most intense. Abu Mahjan, the

famous poet and warrior was in chains and watching the scene of the battle from his cell. He wanted go and fight but he was helpless and could not express his courage and bravery in action. He requested the wife of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ to let him go free on the condition that if he survived he would return and put on the chains on his feet himself. At first Salama, the wife of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ, refused to give him his liberty. But when he insisted and started reciting some verses in sorrowful.

This is enough grief foe me
 The warriors are wielding their spears
 And I have been restricted by chains
 And the cords binding me have been tightened.
 When I try to rise up my chains stop me
 When I call out the door deafens the listener
 Every sound I make seems
 Like a call lost in the desert.

These verses were recited in such sorrowful tones that Salama broke into tears. She moved forward and cut off the chains and set him free to fight. The horse of Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was standing in the stable; he got on to it and rushed into the enemy ranks displaying marvellous courage. He moved from the left to the right and made such a powerful attack that he reaped through the enemy ranks chopping off heads which were falling to the ground as vegetables. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was surprised and turning to his wife, who was seated next to him, he said that this man's manner reminded him of Abu Mahjan, but he was in chains in jail. His wife told him that it was the poet. Because of his humble entreaties she had freed him on condition he would return if he survived. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ swore by Allâh Almighty and said he could never keep such a brave man in chains and forthwith declared him to be a free man.

On the second day as well the *Mujâhideen* triumphed over the enemy though it was not a decisive victory. The third day too it seemed as if the war was not going to end. The Iranian Empire continued to send

in fresh troop everyday. The experienced general Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ adopted a new strategy on the third day. He told a large number of his warriors to move towards Syria and stop there at a suitable spot. With the first rays of dawn divisions consisting of a hundred horsemen each should race their horses fast and reach the battlefield one by one. When these brigades, shouting '*Allâho-Akbar*' reached, one after another, raising a lot of dust, the Iranian army got terrified. They thought fresh reinforcements were coming in from Syria. But the Iranian Empire and his famous General, Rustam, were not prepared to admit defeat. They stuck stubbornly in the battlefield. The army had been positioned on the left and right of the elephants to protect them. But 'Amr bin Ma'd Yakrab after informing his companions, dared to attack the elephants. He did get injured in the process, but succeeded in cutting off the trunk of an elephant. All the other elephants stampeded, fleeing backwards. And as a result, they trampled down their own soldiers. In spite of this it did not seem that the Muslim army could defeat the Iranians, who still had a very large number of soldiers.

Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ formed a special division of ace riders and leading them himself, he advanced towards the Iranian General, Rustam. He was seated on his throne directing his men to fight. With one intense attack, he succeeded in reaching the throne of the Iranian General. He jumped down from his throne and tried to fight against them for some time, but when he saw it was futile, he fled. When he saw a stream in front of him, he jumped into it to save himself; one of the *Mujâhideen*, Hilal, who was chasing him jumped in after him and got stranglehold on him. He pulled him out of the stream by his legs, and chopped off his head with his sword. It was then announced that the Iranian General had been killed. When the Iranian soldiers heard this they lost hope, and started to scamper from the field of battle. The *Mujâhideen* chased them for a long distance and the battlefield was left empty. Thus, the Muslim army won.

Though Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ did not take an active part in the battle because of his illness, he was continuously issuing orders, and for all practical purposes, commanding the forces. He was sitting on one of the balconies of the fort and could view the whole battlefield, the positions of the various divisions and the movements of the two armies.

In this war, besides the faith and fervour of the *Mujâhideen* what could be seen was the excellent planning of the Commander. Hence the credit for the victory in the War of Qâdisiyah went to the great General, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض.

It has been the practice in wars that the General is always held responsible for the success or defeat of the army, whether he plays an active personal role in the battle or not. In spite of his serious illness, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض sat on the balcony and kept giving orders which helped the *Mujâhideen* immensely. He kept calling out:

"*Mujâhideen*, advance towards the left!

Now advance towards the right!

Mughaira you move forward now.

Jareer you retreat a little now.

No'man attack with your sword.

Ash'ath move forward and attack now!

And O Qa'qâ', move forward fast now!

O lovers of Islam and loyal followers of the Prophet ﷺ, well done! See that you do not give up and stop! The world's eyes are on you, envying you and watching your exploits of bravery, daring, fervour and desire for martyrdom!

O *Mujâhideen*! Victory is just a couple of steps away and waiting for you."

The Muslims got a resounding victory in the War of Qâdisiyah, but their victorious march was far from over.

Next the Muslim army faced the Iranians in Madyan. In this battle too the Iranians came very well equipped and armed to the teeth. One major problem for the Muslim forces here was that the river Dajlah lay between them and the Iranian army. The Iranians had deployed their army along the banks of the river and adopted a defensive position. Further, in order to protect themselves, they had destroyed all the

bridges on the river. In order to have a decisive encounter it was necessary that the Muslim army make the first move and advance. General Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs was in a dilemma. How should he cross the river? Even if they did succeed in crossing the river, it was very possible the enemy would launch an attack even before they reached the other bank of the river. In that case the enemy would be at an advantage, because the Muslim army would still be in the river. After a lot of thought and planning he decided to form two armies. He ordered one segment to cross the river under the command of 'Aasim bin 'Amr. He ordered the other segment of the army to cross the river some distance away; this second section he placed under the Command of Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr.

The purpose of his strategy was to keep the enemy busy and involved with the first section of the army reaching the bank. The other section of the army would start crossing after some time had elapsed, and make a deadly attack on the enemy as soon as it reached the shores. This strategy was so successful that it stunned people and aroused their admiration with its ingenuity. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs had created military history with this novel tactical move.

With full faith in Allâh Almighty he had asked his men to step into the river. Their lips were busy with the incantation of the Name of Allâh. They were reciting the Ayah:

"Allâh's Help and Support is enough for me."

The *Mujâhideen* had stepped into the deep waters of the river Dajlah fearlessly. The world saw that they were chatting with each other as if they were casually strolling on dry land. Salaman Al-Farsi was also a soldier in this army. He expressed beautiful inspiring thoughts on this occasion, which deserve to be written in letters of gold in the annals of history. He said:

"Islam is a religion which is perfect and descended from the heavens. I swear by the Almighty Allâh, for the believers of Islam, the river is as negligible as the desert. I swear by the Being in Whose Power lies my life that as many *Mujâhideen* will step out safely from the river as those who stepped into the river. The deep waters of the river can harm them in no way."

History is witness to the fact that not even a rope was lost by the *Mujâhideen* when they crossed the river. A cup fell from the hand of one *Mujâhid*. He asked his companions to help him find it; and what should they see but that the cup came floating towards them on a wave. All Praise is for Allâh! Allâh is Great!

Seeing this fearful awe-inspiring sight, the Iranians started screaming that giants had come to swallow them up and fled in panic. Their General, however, remained resolute. A few scattered men stood by him, but the Iranians faced a total rout. They were decimated the very first day and the important city of Madyan with its royal palaces was occupied. The Iranian Empire had already fled to Yazdagar. All the goods and treasures taken from Madyan were sent to Al-Madinah.

When Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض entered the city of Madyan at the head of his army, he found the city totally deserted in deadly silence. He was so deeply moved that he recited the following Verses:

"How many of gardens and springs that they left behind. And green crops (fields) and goodly places. And comforts of life wherein they used to take delight. Thus (it was)! And We made other people inherit them (i.e. We made the Children of Israel to inherit the kingdom of Egypt)." (44:25-28)

As soon as Madyan was captured the whole of Iraq came under the sway of the Muslims. The Islamic government declared a general amnesty, and people who had fled their houses out of fear were asked to return and settle in their homes. As soon as people heard this announcement they came back and their homes, their wealth and their honour were protected.

After Iraq came under the complete control of the government, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض was appointed governor of the country. It is as difficult to organise a government and run the country as it is to conquer it. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض had impressed people with his military skill and courage; now as Governor and administrator, with his excellent planning and organisational skills, he made Iraq an ideal and exemplary state in a short time.

He informed Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ that the climate of Iraq did not suit the *Mujâhideen* and they were falling ill. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ replied that a new town should be built at a more suitable and healthy place, and housing should be provided for the *Mujâhideen*. So a new location was chosen and the city of Koofah was inhabited. It consisted of as many colonies as there were tribes in the Muslim army. Each tribe was given its own colony and a huge mosque was constructed in the heart of the city. Forty thousand people could offer prayers there at a time. Because of excellent administration the whole of Iraq prospered and the people lived in peace and prosperity.

The sense of justice and fair play, the magnanimity and good treatment of all people made the people happy and contented. But some of the Koofis who were stubborn trouble mongers complained to the government at the centre that their governor did not conduct prayers in a proper manner and displays laxity in devotions.

As soon as Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ received the complaint he sent for Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ. When he reached Al-Madinah, the 'Umar ﷺ asked him about the complaint. Sa'd ﷺ laughed spontaneously and told him that he conducted the prayers in the manner of the Prophet ﷺ. The first two *Rakah* were long in comparison to the next two *Rakah*.

Having satisfied himself, the Caliph asked him to return to Iraq. But Sa'd ﷺ smiled and asked him if he would like him to go to a place where the people were unhappy and are compiling that he did not conduct the prayers in a proper manner. He said he would like to live the rest of his life in Al-Madinah, and requested him to give the responsibility to some other person. So 'Umar Farooq ﷺ appointed his deputy as the permanent governor.

In 23rd Hijrah a Persian fire-worshipper slave made a fatal attack on 'Umar Farooq ﷺ while he was in the act of praying. He could not recover from this attack. While he was in his death throes his attention was drawn to the problem of succession. He was asked to nominate a suitable successor. He did not name any one particular person, but formed a board of six eminent Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and suggested they appoint any one of them to succeed him. Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was one of these six noble men he had on the board. The

Caliph also said that if he had, had the power to nominate the Caliph, he would have nominated Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ. However, he said it was the right of the Muslim *Ummah* to choose their leader. He also recorded a last statement that if Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ was not selected, the person who was elected to that high office should take advantage the services of this illustrious Companion. After he passed away and was buried, on the basis of a majority vote 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ﷺ was chosen Caliph.

After he succeeded to the post he persuaded Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ to go to Iraq as Governor. Sa'd ﷺ went to Iraq and ruled there as governor for three years. After that some differences developed between him and the Finance Minister, 'Abdullâh bin Mas'ood ﷺ and he once again resigned and set out for Al-Madinah. A few miles away from the capital, in the valley of 'Aqeeq he had constructed a house for himself and began to live a secluded life there.

He kept himself aloof from the tragic events of the Battles of Jamal and Safeen, He had instructed his family members not to tell him anything about these arguments and infighting, because it hurt him deeply. It was terrible, he said, that the swords of the Muslims were chopping off the heads of brother Muslims. There were people worthy of respect on both sides, he said, and even in his wildest imagination he could not think of lifting up arms against any one of them.

When he was eighty years old in 54th Hijrah, while living in seclusion in 'Aqeeq he received the summons of death. His son, describing his last days, saying:

"My father's head was in my lap, his eyes were losing their focus. I started to cry. He asked me why I was crying; and asked me to be at ease, as he was sure that Allâh Almighty would not give him any punishment in the Hereafter. *Insha' Allâh*, (God willing). He said that he would go to Paradise, as he had heard these glad tiding from the Prophet ﷺ himself. Then he pointed to a cupboard and it was opened for him. There was an old sheet lying in it and he had it taken out. He said he had worn it during the Battle of Badr, and preserved it very

carefully. He said he wanted that sheet to be used as his shroud; no matter if it was old, it was a blessed and historic sheet which he wanted to take into the grave with him. And soon his soul soared towards heaven."

Among the *Mujâhideen* Companion, he was the last to go to his Creature, Allâh Almighty. He was buried in *Jannatul-Baquahi'*.

O glorious hero of Qâdisiyah and conqueror of Persia!

O victor who proved his wisdom and farsightedness in Madâyan!

O beloved Governor of Iraq!

O fearless warrior who raced horses in the river Dajlah!

O extinguisher of the fire worshipped in Persia!

O maker of the city of Koofa!

O lover of Al-Madinah!

O hearer of the glad tidings of a place in Paradise from the lips of the Prophet ﷺ himself!

O great general and beloved ruler!

O Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs!

Farewell, farewell!

May you be happy in Paradise enjoying the cool breezes and smiling like the lovely flowers and enjoying the spring seasons of Paradise!

‘Abdur-Rahmân bin ‘Auf

Ummul-Mo'mineen ‘Âishah رضي الله عنها said:

“O Allâh, May you give the sweet and cool waters of the stream of *Salsabil* in Paradise to ‘Abdur-Rahmân to drink.”

'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf

He was tall, fair good-looking, with rosy cheeks, curly hair, a bright face and a strong and spry physique. He was an experienced and liberal businessman, yet one who was also wise and learned in matters religious, extremely truthful and sincere. He was a model of pride and self-respect. He was one of those ten¹ Companion who, in this very life, had been given the happy tidings of their elevation to Paradise after death.

He was also fortunate enough to have the Prophet ﷺ name him as the Commander of the campaign to Doamatul-Jandal, and with his blessed hands he had placed the turban of the leader on his head. At the age of thirty he accepted Islam at the invitation of Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه. He also earned the privilege and honour of having immigrating twice in the cause of Islam - once to Ethiopia and then again to Al-Madinah. Before he became a Muslim his name was 'Abd 'Amr, but when he accepted Islam the Prophet ﷺ changed his name to 'Abdur-Rahmân. Later he became known as 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf رضي الله عنه. He was so intelligent and refined by nature that he gave up drinking before converting to Islam.

When 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf رضي الله عنه emigrated to Al-Madinah, he was empty-handed and neither money nor property. The Prophet ﷺ had named him the brother in religion of Sa'd bin Rabee' Ansari رضي الله عنه. The latter, welcoming him in all sincerity and said to him,

¹ Also known in Islamic history as the 'Ashra Mubashirah.'

"Allâh ﷺ has been very Kind and Generous to me and I am the richest man among the people of Al-Madinah. At present I have two big orchards and I have two wives. You can choose any of the two gardens for yourself and I will transfer it to your name. And I will divorce one of my wives, so that after her period of 'Iddat'¹ you can marry her. Since you are my brother in religion, it is my religious and social duty to look after your needs."

This spirit of sacrifice is unparalleled in the annals of human history.

But the pride and self-respect of 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ could not allow him to accept this offer. He told him,

"May Allâh Almighty bless you with greater prosperity in your possessions and your family and children. May you enjoy your wealth. Just show me the way to the market. I will earn my own livelihood, I do not like to burden anyone."

Then he found his way to the market and started his own business. Since he had started with faith in Allâh Almighty, he was blessed with prosperity and wealth. One evening he went to see the Prophet ﷺ. The expensive perfume from his clothes scented the air around him. The Prophet ﷺ asked him about the drastic change he could see in his appearance. With great respect and humility, he smiled and told the Prophet ﷺ that he had married an Ansari woman. The Prophet ﷺ asked how much dowry he had given her. He answered that he had given her a gold ingot. Then the Prophet ﷺ told him to have a wedding dinner, even if it was only the meat of one goat.

'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ says that in business Allâh Almighty gave him prosperity and wealth beyond his wildest dreams. If he picked up even a stone it turned to gold and silver in his hands. In addition to his business ventures, he entered into the field of agriculture on a very large scale. The Prophet ﷺ allotted to him a huge agricultural farm in Khaiber, and using his own resources as well he bought extensive agricultural lands. He had twenty camels just to transport water to irrigate the fields in Jaraf. Just as Allâh ﷺ had

¹ The period after divorce (three months) or death of the husband (four months and ten days) after which the lady can remarry.

bestowed wealth on 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ, he spent it lavishly in charity in the name of Allâh Almighty.

On one occasion when seven hundred camels of his all together entered Al-Madinah laden with grains, it seemed as if the whole city vibrated. Ummul Mo'mineen 'Âishah Siddiqah رضي الله عنها asked what was the unusual this unusual rustling sound and what had caused it. When she was informed it was due to the seven hundred camels of 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ with their trading goods, entering the city all together. The moment she heard his name she said that she had heard the Prophet ﷺ say that 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ would enter *Jannah* 'leaping and jumping', that is to say with ease. Someone reported her words to 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ. His joy knew no bounds on hearing this and as soon as he found time, he approached her and asked her very respectfully if she had really heard these words about his going to *Jannah* from the blessed tongue of the Prophet ﷺ himself.

When she answered in the affirmative, he expressed his joy and asked her to bear witness that in his delight at the good news he was dedicating his expensive camels and his business goods and wealth for the welfare of the Muslim *Ummah*, for the sake of Allâh Almighty.

Praise be to Allâh for the strength of their faith and belief! We should sacrifice ourselves for Allâh ﷺ and for these celestial beings who were turned into pure gold because of the influence of the sacred personality of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ spent without reservations in the way of charity for Allâh Almighty from the very beginning to the very last moments of his life. Yet he left immense wealth for his heirs. For his four wives he left eighty thousand dinar; huge bricks of gold were part of his assets not in use. These were cut and distributed among his heirs. When he died, besides his immovable properties, he left a thousand camels, a hundred horses and a herd of three thousand goats. Instead of feeling happy on seeing his wealth, often used to feel worried and anxious.

On one occasion when he was about to break his fast, food was placed before him. When he saw the dishes he broke into tears, and said Mus'ab bin 'Umair was better than him. When he died he did not have even a sheet for his shroud, large enough to cover his head and

feet at the same time. If the head was covered, the feet would be exposed; and if the feet were covered his head remained bare. But the world had become very spacious for him. He feared that Allâh Almighty bestow all his bounties on him in this world and deprive him of His bounties and blessings in Eternity. At the very thought he started to sigh and weep; as a result he could not even touch the food kept in front of him.

By Allâh's grace such was the graphic picture of Eternity in the minds of those noble souls. Similarly once when he was weeping and wailing, someone saw him and asked why he was mourning and what tragedy or problem had overtaken him. Why was he shedding tears and looking so sorrowful? He answered,

"The ruler of the Muslim *Ummah*, the Prophet ﷺ, had said goodbye to the world while he was in such a state that there was not even enough simple and ordinary food for his family. Today we are living in wealth and plenty. We don't know what will be our end result. I pray that Allâh Almighty does not get rid of us in the Hereafter after giving us everything here."

Such people with such ideas and viewpoints! It is the Greatness and Glory of Allâh ﷺ!



In spite of his time-consuming business and agricultural activities 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ؓ took an active part in fighting battles of *jihâd* for the exaltation and glory of Islam. He had courageously slain the dangerous enemy of Islam, 'Umair bin 'Uthmân, by cutting off his head.

Talking about the Battle of Badr, in which he had taken part, he mentions how two young Ansar brothers, Ma'âth and Ma'ooth, approached him and innocently asked him who Abu Jahl was, and where he was at that moment. He asked them what work they had with him. They replied that they had heard that he used to abuse the Prophet ﷺ and they had come into the battlefield that day with the determination that they would definitely send him packing to *Jahânum* (hell) that day, or die themselves. As they were talking he saw Abu

Jahl approaching very arrogantly. Immediately 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ pointed him out to them and said that their prey was approaching. They attacked him with the speed of lightening and dealt him such a fatal blow that he fell off his horse. What a spirit of *jihâd* animated these young boys; their unbounded love for the Prophet ﷺ gave them almost superhuman strength. Their astounding feat of destroying one of the greatest pillars of the enemy at such a young age was truly remarkable.

In 6 Hijrah the Muslim army was sent to bring the area of Doamatul Jandal under the control of the Islamic government. The Banu Kalb tribe who were enemies of Islam lived there. The Prophet ﷺ appointed 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ the commander of the Muslim army, placed the turban of the general on his head and handed him the flag. He instructed him to first invite the tribe to convert to Islam; if they accepted, it would be better for them. If they did not agree then the Muslim army had to fight resolutely. But they should be careful not to harm or kill the aged people, the women and the children. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ reached Doamatul Jandal and following the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ, spent three days in talking and lecturing to the people about Islam in a tactful and rational manner. They invited the people to come into the fold of Islam. The chieftain of the tribe, Asbagh bin 'Amr kulbi, who loved Christianity much, was affected by their teachings and decided to become a Muslim. Influenced by his conversion, most of his people too converted to Islam. Those who did not want to accept Islam got their freedom on condition that they agreed to pay the *jazyah*.

The other important event which took place was that the chieftain got his daughter married to 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ. Thus through instruction and invitation this area came under the sway of Islam in a very peaceful manner without any loss of life or property.



'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ used to spend his wealth for the propagation of Islam without counting the cost. This really gave great support to the armies of the *Mujâhideen*. On one occasion he bought for them five hundred horses trained for military combat. On another occasion he bought fifteen hundred pure-bred Arab steeds for the *Mujâhideen*.

Just before his death he freed all his slaves and wrote in his will that the survivors of the Battle of Badr should be presented with four hundred dinars each; he also wrote that the *Ummahatul-Mo'mineen* should be given a great proportion of his wealth and goods.

'Â'ishah رضي الله عنها often used to offer this supplication for him to Allâh ﷺ:

"O Allâh please give 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ the sweet waters of the stream of *Salsabil* in Paradise."

He was fortunate enough to receive many blessed prayers from many in this life on earth. The Prophet ﷺ prayed for his prosperity, and gave him the glad tidings of a life in the Hereafter in Paradise.

He tied the turban of the commander on his head with his own hands, and placed the flag of Islam in his hands. Ummul Mo'mineen 'Â'ishah رضي الله عنها prayed to Allâh ﷺ to quench his thirst with the sweet water of *Salsabil*.

What greater honours can a human being receive in this world?



The Prophet ﷺ announced the recruitment of *Mujâhideen* for the Battle of Tabuk. Besides the need for *Mujâhideen* to fight against the huge number of soldiers in the Roman army, there was a dire need for money and provisions. The journey was long and arduous, and they had very limited means. They lacked camels and horses as well. Due to this reason many of the volunteers could not be included in the army, and they were in tears. They were weeping because they did not have transport and means, and thus they were deprived of the honour of taking part in *Jihâd*. The army which set out for the War of Tabook was also called the *Jaeesh-Usarah* (Penniless army). On this occasion the Prophet ﷺ urged people to spend freely to equip the army for *Jihâd*. The Companion who had the means was vying with each other to respond to the Prophet's call. This time too 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf's contribution outweighed all others. He brought bags full of silver.

All Praise to Allâh the Pure! It was a sight to behold the scenes of faith and fervour, sincerity and purity, generosity and munificence! Nowhere

under the azure heavens have men seen such purity of souls!

The army of Islam set out for Tabook. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf was also travelling with the army. They camped at a site on the way, and 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf led the prayers, as the Prophet was not present. When they were in the middle of their prayers, the Prophet joined them and prayed behind 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf, his loyal Companion who was a personification of purity, generosity and sincerity. This was a very great honour for 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf and the Prophet stood behind him, and he led the prayers.

What a great stature and what respect and honour! The Prophet gave this exalted position to his loyal servant and follower. He took the dwellers of the earth to the seventh heaven and may he be exalted and place in even more exalted regions!

Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf was with the Prophet on the historic occasion of the conquest of Makkah and from that time on till the *Hajjahtul-Widah* (the Farewell).

Pilgrimage of the Prophet he was his constant and active Companion in all the battles fought by the *Mujâhideen*. In 10th Hijrah the Prophet passed on to meet his Allâh. When the problem of whom was to be the next Caliph and successor arose, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf played a very important role in finding a solution. When Abu Bakr Siddiq, the first Caliph, was on his deathbed he consulted with 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf, before nominating 'Umar Farooq as his successor. When he was stabbed while leading the prayers, it was 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf who quickly took over from him. After completing the prayers, he rushed the wounded Caliph, 'Umar Farooq to his house. He also reminded him to nominate his successor. He named a board of six people to run the affairs of government, and instructed them to select one of them within three days. One member of that board of six was 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf, 'Uthmân, 'Ali, Sa'd, Zubair and Talhah رضي الله عنهم were the others.

Two days after 'Umar Farooq ﷺ passed away and was buried, the discussions continued as to who should be the next Caliph. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ suggested that instead of six, the membership should be restricted to three people. Hence Talhah ﷺ gave up his position in favour of 'Uthmân ﷺ. Zubair ﷺ gave up his place in favour of 'Ali and Sa'd رضي الله عنهما, wanted to give up his place for 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ. But he refused and withdrew his own name. Thus he could freely give his opinion to who he considered best in the interests of the *Ummah*.

After a great deal of consideration and soul-searching, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ voted in favour of 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ﷺ and made the announcement. And he was the first to swear the oath of loyalty on his palm. Thus in a very pleasant way the problem was resolved.

The way he handled the whole affair was remarkable for its foresight and wisdom.

Amir-ul-Mo'mineen 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ﷺ once said he had heard the Prophet ﷺ say that the person who served and protected the *Ummahatul-Mo'mineen* (Mothers of the Believers) after his death would most certainly be a picture of trustworthiness, honesty and purity. So, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ performed this duty very well and with sincerity. During the *Hajj* he would organise provisions and conveyance for the *Ummahatul-Mo'mineen*. In the duration of the journey he would make special arrangements for their privacy. With respect and honour they would be protected throughout the period of *Hajj*. He would earn their supplications in his favour with his earnest, honest and devoted efforts to provide them with every imaginable comfort and convenience.

He passed away from this life to Paradise during the caliphate of 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ﷺ, and was buried in *Jannatul-Baqahi*.

‘Amr bin Al-‘Âs ﷺ

‘Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ said:

“O ‘Amr when I see your intelligence, your wisdom your understanding and your farsightedness, I feel you should have been the very first to enter into the fold of Islam.”

'Amr bin Al-'Âs



Daring, fearless, resolute, intelligent and wise – these were some of the best qualities of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs. He was a self-controlled man who never let his passions and emotions get the better of him. Purity of heart and soul distinguished him. A very pious man, he devoted his nights to prayer. At the same time he was a skilful and dextrous statesman, politician and a great leader of men. He was educated in his childhood – rare in the Arabia of the times – and wrote poetry for his own entertainment but never used it to make extravagant claims and never ever did he use satire as a medium for making fun of others. Short, stocky, but well built, he was a born leader of men, a general who could get his soldiers out of any tricky situation using his experience and ingenuity.

Born rich, he considered wealth to be a great blessing from Allâh Almighty and expressed his love for it from his childhood to the end of his days. Following in his father's footsteps he took up business as his profession. His father, 'Âs bin Wa'al, was a very rich perfumes dealer. In connection with his business he used to travel a great deal and had visited Syria, Ethiopia, Yemen and Egypt. Thus, he had the opportunity to meet different kinds of people from different tribes and gain a great deal of experience. He was excellent at solving knotty problems. His clansmen, family and friends often used to go to him for help, when they failed to find answers to puzzling issues. When they felt helpless they would leave him to come to grips with it. He would find the solution using his natural God-given talents in no time. He had no equal among his tribesmen in intelligence and understanding. In the field of battle as well as in the field of politics his exploits and achievements were enviable. During the days before

he became a Muslim he represented the Quraish in the court of Najâshi, the Christian King of Ethiopia, to try and bring back the first Muslim migrants from there. After he pledged allegiance to Islam he visited various barbaric tribes to preach this new religion. He had also fought in wars against the Muslims, challenging them. After he became a Muslim, he fought in the *Jihâd* in various countries like Syria, Egypt, South Africa and Palestine against the idol worshippers and created havoc amongst them. After this he became well known as a General. The whole region acknowledged his authority and superiority. He lived an enviable life as a politician, reformer, preacher, educator, and also as a just ruler.

Influenced by the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, many people in the valley of Makkah became Muslims. The Quraish were agitated and extremely annoyed by this state of affairs. They put their heads together to search for a means to stop the spread of this new religion, which was threatening and challenging their authority. They appealed to the heads of the Prophet's tribe, the Banu Hishâm, saying this, a youth from their tribe had created differences between them. Men and women, influenced by him, were turning against the religious beliefs of their forefathers. They appealed to them to either kill him or hand him over to them, so that they could get rid of him. They said they could not tolerate him insulting their gods. If they did not build a dam now, even their leadership of Arabia would be engulfed in the flood of his new religion.

The Banu Hishâm refused to give in to these demands and the Quraish started persecution of the Muslims. They would not stop short at any means of oppressing and torturing the Muslims. They would catch hold of the believers and drag them over the hot desert sands; others were made to lie on live coals and blocks of stone and rocks would be placed on their stomachs. When the fat from the bodies melted it would quench the fire. Thus the unarmed Muslims were made to suffer in all kinds of ways. Taking this situation into account the Prophet ﷺ advised the oppressed and innocent Muslim converts to migrate to Ethiopia, since King Najâshi was known to be a

good and just man. Obeying his command a band of eighty men and eighteen women left Makkah. In Ethiopia they were very well received, and Najâshi gave them permission to live in his country and practice their religion in peace. When the Quraish came to know of that the Muslims were leading a peaceful life in Ethiopia, they were very agitated and vexed. They started thinking along a different line of approach. They tried to think of means to turn King Najâshi against the Muslims; they thought that this small band of Muslims living in peace and prosperity were a potential source of danger for them. They had to find ways to persuade the King to come around to their point of view. The next step was to find the best man for the job. After a great deal of thought and discussion they reached the conclusion that 'Amr bin Al-'Âs was the most suitable emissary to carry their message to King Najâshi. There were various points in his favour. Firstly, he had old and friendly contacts with the King; secondly he was very tactful and sensible in presenting a case. They also decided to send expensive gifts for the King to soften his heart. When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs reached Ethiopia, he first met ministers and the Christian Bishop and presented them all with expensive gifts. Then he requested that they second and support his viewpoint in the court of King Najâshi.

When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs got permission to present himself in the court, taking into consideration the protocol of the court, he prostrated before King Najâshi. Then very respectfully he presented gifts. After graciously accepting the gifts, King Najâshi asked him for the purpose of his visit. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs replied that this time he had come as a representative of his people, so that he could draw his attention to a very important problem facing them. Further, he added King Najâshi was known to be the personification of justice and fair play. His country was a cradle of peace and tranquillity, and there was no turmoil or tyranny. He should not give permission to trouble-makers to settle in his country. King Najâshi agreed with all that he had to say, and said he would certainly not encourage any cruelty or agitation to breed in his land. And truth to tell, there were no such people among his subjects. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs said that it was true that there were no lovers of evil and cruelty in his land, but some trouble-makers had come and settled in his land from Makkah. He had given refuge to these people who were very cruel and had created discord

and conflicts in their own land between brother to brother; and even sons did not hesitate to confront their own fathers. If they were allowed to live in his land, they would inevitably create a lot of friction and strife in his peaceful country as well, since this was their nature. He, 'Amr, knew since there were many among them who were his own kith and kin. He suggested that he get rid of them as early as possible. He said he had one more point felt it was his duty to bring to the King's attention. These people had not accepted the Christian faith; on the other hand they had concocted a religion which was of their own making. The Quraish had sent him to present a true picture to his majesty and appeal to him to oust them from his country or to hand them over to him. Their other companions had heard of the manner in which they were settled in Ethiopia, peacefully and happily, and were anxious to join them.

At this point the ministers and bishop also joined in respectfully and asked the King's to allow them to say a few words. The King said that of course they had his permission. All of them said in unison that in their humble opinion the Muslims should be handed over to the delegation of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, since they knew these people and their ways very well, and they, the Ethiopians should not get involved in their internal fights. This interference could get them a bad name.

King Najâshi was furious at this and said that what they suggested was impossible. He could not hand over people who had taken refuge in his kingdom without first talking to them and hearing what they had to say.

'Amr bin Al-'Âs tried to convince him and said these people were so arrogant that they did not even prostrate before the King, saying their religion did not permit this. They give no importance even to the King. King Najâshi ignored these remarks and sent a messenger to fetch the Muslims. Upon receiving the summons of the King, the Muslims consulted among themselves as to what they should say to him. It was unanimously decided that Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رض would represent them and talk to King Najâshi in the court. The others would remain silent and just listen. A small delegation was chosen after some discussion by Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رض to accompany him and they set out from the court. They asked for permission to enter the

court of King Najâshi. They were given permission and were received courteously and with respect. Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ approached King Najâshi and without bowing down or prostrating, wished him, 'Asslamo 'Alaikum', in the Islamic way.

When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ saw this he could not contain himself and turning around to his companion, told him to note how soft and gentle had been King behaviour.

Then, addressing the King he pointed out to him the arrogance in the behaviour and greetings of the Muslims. They did not even bend down and stood erect and greeted him.

King Najâshi asked Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ why he did not prostrate before him with respect. He replied spontaneously that Allâh Almighty had sent His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who ordered them not to bow or prostrate before any other, except his Creature. He taught them to wish each other as brothers in Islam with the greetings of peace and well-being. He then gave a speech explaining the teachings of Islam; King Najâshi was so impressed and satisfied by this speech that he returned the gifts of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs and also commanded his courtiers and ministers to do the same.

The next day 'Amr bin Al-'Âs came with the suggestion that King Najâshi ask the Muslims what they thought about the son of Mary, or Isa عليه السلام. He told him they had a very strange viewpoint and did not accept him as the son of God.

So the King sent for the Muslims and asked them for their opinion of Isa عليه السلام. Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ replied:

"We believe him to be the soul of Allâh ﷺ who he sent by His absolute powers to the virgin Maryam."

King Najâshi agreed and said that Isa عليه السلام, was not an iota more than that. The padres were very offended at this, but the King ignored their displeasure and asked them to swear as if they were in the presence of the One True Allâh and speak the truth as written in the Bible. Was it not said in the Divine Book that there would be another Prophet between him and the Day of Judgement?

They bowed before the King and admitted that there was such a

revelation. 'Isa عليه السلام had said in the Bible:

"A Prophet (ﷺ), named Ahmed, will come after me. Accept him and pledge allegiance to him for he will be a True Prophet."

When he heard this statement from the padres King Najâshi spontaneously said that if he had not had the heavy responsibilities of government he would have immediately presented himself at the feet of the Last True Prophet ﷺ and travelled to Makkah.

Then addressing the Muslims he said that they could stay wherever they wished in his country, and instructed that from then onwards they were to be treated as state guests. He returned the gifts to 'Amr bin Al-'Âs and said that he could not accept bribes as Allâh Almighty had not given him his country in return for a bribe. He said that at one stage he had lost the country, but Allâh ﷺ had in His Mercy returned it to him. He could never forget the time when the people had rebelled against his father and killed him; his uncle had been made king. He had been taken out of the royal palace and sold to an Arab trader. One night lightning struck his uncle and he died; none of his twelve sons was capable of ruling the kingdom. Out of sheer necessity the people had searched for the trader; paid him the price, which he demanded and brought me back and enthroned. This kingdom was a blessing from Allâh Almighty. King Najâshi was singing Praises of Allâh Almighty as he sat on his throne, and 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, and his companion, 'Abdullâh bin Abi Rabee'ah who were listening to him were very embarrassed. But this satiation was hopeful was very encouraging for Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ؓ and his friends. The intelligent and rational speech given by Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ؓ was as follows:

"Your Royal Majesty, we were idol worshippers, and cruelty and harshness were part of our existence. Every evil was found in its highest degree in us. We did not value a good name or care for respectability. Having Mercy on our barbaric condition Allâh ﷺ in His Infinite Mercy sent a Messenger to us. In a short time this True Prophet ﷺ brought about a radical change in us.

His teachings brought purity into our lives and changed our characters completely. He taught us about the Pure Oneness of Allâh Almighty, and our thoughts turned towards worship and

prayer. He also changed the direction and goals of our hearts and taught us to give charity to the poor. He taught us to tell the truth, behave well with our kith and kin and avoid lewdness and vulgarity. He told us it was wrong to swallow what belonged to the orphan and to avoid backbiting and defaming the characters of pure women. He taught us to be good to our neighbours. When we obeyed him and put his teachings into practice, we found a revolutionary change in our lives. We who were highway robbers became guides helping and steering others to the right path. Our hearts no longer longed for sins, but yearned to do good deeds. Our hearts were so moved and softened that we learned to cry."

When the Quraish and their allies saw this change in us they just could not tolerate it. They started to put obstacles in our way. They started persecuting us and torturing us. We could not put up with their tyranny and despotism and finally left our beloved hometown, Makkah. Having suffered all kinds of troubles and tired of being beaten up, we came to your country hoping that you would not be cruel or unjust. Relying on your well-known benevolence and kindness, we hope to be given the opportunity to live here in peace.

It seemed as if King Najâshi was transported into an ecstasy, when he heard the speech of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. Very gently and affectionately he asked him to kindly recite to him some of the *Ayâht* revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ recited part of Sûrah Maryam, and the King was very pleased and said that it seemed that the origin of these Verses and of those revealed to Isa عليه السلام seemed to be the same.

When the present bishop in the court heard the *Ayât* of Sûrah Maryam they were moved to tears. King Najâshi wanted to hear more of the Noble Qur'ân, saying it was beautiful and was truly the Word of Allâh.

Thinking it was an opportune moment, Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ asked the King to ask 'Amr bin Al-'Âs and his companions what their crime was. Had they murdered anyone? Did they owe money to anyone? Were they slaves who had run away? Had they infringed upon the rights of any person? Had they stolen anybody's property? Why had the Quraish sent these people after them?

King Najâshi asked 'Amr bin Al-'Âs and his companion, 'Abdullâh bin Abu Rabee'ah, what crime had been committed by these people? When they saw the regal majesty and wrath of Najâshi they became nervous, and sent away from his court, having failed in their mission. Booth left the King's court dragging their feet, abject and ashamed. They reached Makkah and narrated in detail what had happened in the court in Ethiopia. The Quraish were even more inflamed and immediately boycotted the Muslims.

Finally they planned that they would murder the Prophet ﷺ, but they failed in their attempt. Allâh Almighty took away his Prophet ﷺ from their midst and provided the means by which he could reach Al-Madinah, safe and sound. The Quraish pursued the Muslims even there to annihilate them completely, and as a result the two wars of Badr and Uhud were waged.

In the Battle of the Trenches the enemy made elaborate preparations to make a sudden assault on the Muslims. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs took part in all these battles, but his heart was overawed and impressed by Islam. Then one day the idea came to him that acceptance of Islam would bring deliverance; he set out from Makkah to pledge his faith to the One True Allâh and His Messenger. On the way he saw Khâlid bin Waleed and 'Uthmân bin Talhah, who were on their way to Al-Madinah.

When Khâlid bin Waleed saw him he asked him where he was planning to go. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs asked him where he was going. Khâlid replied he was going to meet the Prophet ﷺ and swear allegiance to Islam. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs replied:

"I have the same desire. Since our destination and objective is the same, and we had lost our way in the same manner, why don't we travel together? Talking on topics of common interest on our journey we reached Al-Madinah in the month of Safar in 8th Hijrah. We went in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and swore allegiance to Islam, in his presence. He was very benevolent and kind and said that Makkah had thrown its favourite sons towards them. First Khâlid bin Waleed had the honour to swear the oath of allegiance and then 'Uthmân bin Talhah and finally I received this honour."



Since some time before accepting Islam, in his mind, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs had begun to feel a liking and inclination this pure religion. But the authority and influence of his father, and the arrogance and pride of the Quraish, had stood in his way from openly declaring himself a Muslim. He could feel very strongly and intensely that the Muslims were becoming stronger day by day. Islam was rising very rapidly and the Muslim was becoming a force to reckon with. Whoever opposed them faced a crushing defeat; it was as if they are fated to fail. At every moment he felt that Islam was spreading over the whole region rapidly and people in large numbers were eagerly entering its fold. He felt that Islam would finally triumph and every other power would be crushed and reduced to smithereens.

All the rebellious and malicious plots of his father and his friends and kindred could not harm the Prophet ﷺ and his fellow Muslims in any way. These thoughts and feelings became so deeply embedded in his heart and mind that he was constantly engrossed in thinking of what to do next. Restlessness and anxiety seemed to perturb and overpower him.

Things came to such a pass that he gathered together those companions of his who relied and depended on him, and accepted his word as the last word in all matters. They trusted him absolutely and felt it was an honour to walk on the path chosen by him. He told them:

"I feel that the Muslim will get ascendancy and reach it zenith. Islam is like a magnet, attracting and enamouring people very fast. Anyone who opposes it is bound to face defeat; at this critical juncture it would be better for us to migrate to Ethiopia. The king there, Najâshi, is a very kind and soft-hearted man and we can find refuge there. It would be better to live as subjects of Najâshi, than live subjugated by the Muslim. There would be an added advantage; if the Muslims take over our land we will escape from their cruelty and tyranny. On the other hand, if our people overcome them, there is nothing to prevent us from returning to own country.

He continues to say:

"All my companions said that you are true and agreed with my plan, and were willing to migrate to Ethiopia. Then I suggested

that we carry some expensive gifts with us to present them to the King. This would help to soften his heart towards us. We bought some very fine quality leather and some other things and set out for Ethiopia. When we reached the court of the King we entered his presence bowing our heads very respectfully, and offered our gifts to him. As we were entering, we saw 'Amr bin Umayyah Zamri leaving the court. The Prophet ﷺ had sent him as an ambassador."

After the King had accepted our gifts with pleasure, I took what I considered an opportune moment to request him to hand over the man, who had just left his presence, as I wished to kill him. The moment I uttered this phrase, King Najâshi got into a towering royal rage and asked wrathfully if I wanted to kill the ambassador of the Prophet ﷺ. He was the being to whom Allâh Almighty sent revelations through His Angel, the every same Angel who had visited Mûsâ عليه السلام and other Prophets of Allâh. He told me I should fear the Wrath of Allâh Almighty. When I saw His Majesty's grandeur and wrath, I began to tremble all over. When his anger subsided somewhat he spoke to me in very gentle tones.

"O 'Amr, you are my old friend, and my sympathies are with you. Listen to what I tell you and obey Muhammad, the Messenger of Allâh Almighty. This will benefit you. He is the True Prophet ﷺ and I have no doubts whatsoever on this score. He will overwhelm his enemies in the same way as Mûsâ عليه السلام overcame his enemy, the Fir'aun."

I told him:

"Your Royal Highness, are you saying this believing in fully?"

He replied that he believed in it wholeheartedly, just as he believed in the day after the sun rose up in the heavens. Even from before this his heart had been uprooted from his old faith. I replied:

"Your Majesty, if this is so, then I would like to become a Muslim without any delay."

King Najâshi very happily put out his palm and 'Amr bin Al-'Âs pledge allegiance to Islam.

He continues:

"Then I left for Al-Madinah, so I could meet the Prophet ﷺ himself and swear allegiance on his palm personally, and enter the fold of Islam. This incident occurred about six months before the conquest of Makkah. On the way I met Khâlid bin Waleed and 'Uthmân bin Talhah. Then all of us reached Al-Madinah together and tethered our camels outside the Mosque of the Prophet ﷺ. We bathed, changed clothes, since the *Adhâن*¹ for the 'Asr prayers had already been over. After prayer we entered the presence of the Prophet ﷺ. Thus our lives and fortunes changed and we entered the fold of Islam."

On one occasion, 'Umar bin Khattâb رضي الله عنه said:

"Amr from your intelligence, wisdom, foresight and understanding, it strikes me that you should have been the first to accept Islam."

Answering him, I said:

"O 'Umar! Men's hearts are in the control of that being who has created us. This kind of obedience and honour are given when He desires it; a mortal has no part in this. Now that this honour has come to me I feel it is due to my good fortune. And I consider that time when I entered the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and he received me with smiling face, to be the fund and capital of my whole life. When I wished him with the Islamic greeting of 'Asslamo 'Alikum', he replied with smiling gently. I was ashamed and embarrassed, my eyes were cast down. He took me under the protection of his benevolence, and I read the *Kalimah* - 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and Muhammad is His Prophet and Messenger.' Immediately after reading it, I asked him to offer supplications to Allâh ﷺ for me, so that my previous sins are forgiven. He answered me:

"When you accept Islam all your previous sins are forgiven, and in the same way *Hijrah* (migration) also erases all previous sins."

¹ The call to prayers, given five times a day for the five compulsory prayers,

I had accepted Islam with a firm faith and a very strong determination, which was accepted by the Prophet ﷺ. That was the reason why I was appointed Commander of the Muslim army for the Battle of As-Salāsal just a few days later. Among the *Mujāhideen* were such notable Companions as Abu Bakr Siddiq, 'Umar bin Khattāb and 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه. After that I command the forces of the Muslim army in many dangerous encounters."

This honour was bestowed on 'Amr bin Al-'Âs because of his intelligence, wisdom, farsightedness, statesmanship and courage. He is placed among those four great Arab leaders, who because of their leadership both Arabs and non-Arabs acknowledged skills. The other three were Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân, Mughairah bin Shu'bah and Ziyad bin Rabee'ah.

After gaining complete control of Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ decided to raze down to the earth the various temples where idols were worshipped in and around the Ka'bah. This was to completely uproot the centres where others were being equated with the One True Allâh Almighty. He made a public announcement that all those who had idols in their houses should break them with their own hands. All the idols in the Ka'bah were shattered into pieces, and the Sacred House of Allâh was cleansed of all impurity and filth. All the temples in the environs of Makkah were destroyed and razed to the ground by Companions who were chosen for this task by the Prophet ﷺ.

Khâlid bin Waleed was sent to destroy an idol called 'Uzzâ, Sa'd bin Zaid Ashhali was sent to demolish an idol called Manat. And 'Amr bin Al-'Âs was to destroy an idol by the name of Sawa'. This idol had been installed at a place about hundred miles from Makkah. It had been made in the name of Sawa', the son of Sheeth bin Adam عليه السلام and it was being worshipped from the time of Nûh عليه السلام. The tribe of Hatheel was its trustees. When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs reached there, he found an attendant at the shrine. He asked him for the purpose of his visit. He answered he had come there to destroy the idol, and uproot this evil practice of associating others with the One

True Allâh. The attendant answered that he could not possibly do this because their god was so powerful that he could teach the person who insulted him a real lesson. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ shouted out *Allâhô Akbar*, attacked the idol with his sword and in a few seconds broke it into smithereens. Turning to the attendant triumphantly, he asked him what he had to say? He was trembling with fear and stuttered in shock:

"He is so weak that he cannot even defend himself? Surely it is a weakness in our minds, this cannot possibly be our god. He cannot help us when we are in trouble; surely we are mistaken. You are right. I, today accept Islam with all the sincerity of my heart. I herewith cleanse myself from the filth and impurity of associating others with the One True Allâh and prostrate before the One True Allâh, with Whom none can be associated. Today reality has been revealed to me, I wish I had not spent my whole life in the swamp of idol worship."

'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ had broken the idol Sawa' into fragments without any hindrance.

Ibn Jareer writes that Sawa' was the grandson of Adam عليه السلام, the son of Sheeth عليه السلام. After his death religious people who deeply respected him, made a statue of him and over the years he came to be worshipped. This idol of his was being worshipped since the time of the Prophet Nûh عليه السلام. 'Abdullâh bin 'Abbas ﷺ is quoted in the *Hadith of Sahih Al-Bukhâri* as saying that the people of the Prophet Nûh عليه السلام had made images and statues of selected people. At first these idols were only respected and revered, then Satan urged them to worship them. So they started to offer prayers to them.

On the south east of the peninsula of Arabia lies the state of 'Omân, today it is known as Muscat or 'Omân. The people of this land associated others with the One True Allâh and the Prophet ﷺ sent 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ to invite them to the true religion of Islam. Two brothers, 'Abd and Jeefer ruled over this country, and they also did not worship One True Allâh, associating others with him. The Prophet ﷺ also wrote letter to them to convince them to convert to Islam.

In the Name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

This letter is from Muhammad bin 'Abdullâh to 'Abd and Jeefer. He

has taken the task of preaching, of following and obeying so that he may gain peace and concord. Accept Islam and you will live in peace and safety.

I have been sent as a Messenger for all the worlds, so that I may warn people of the torments and tortures of Allâh ﷺ (for disbelievers) and adduce arguments to convince the *Kuffar*. If both you brothers accept Islam, you will continue to rule over your land. If you refuse your right to govern will be lost and your end will be a lesson for others.

'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ took this letter and left for Yemen ('Oman) alone. Divine providence had bestowed him with wisdom and intelligence. So when he reached 'Omân he did not display any haste, but took every step after a great deal of thought, consideration and planning. As he was gifted with political insight, he first studied the character and habits of the two brothers. He reached the conclusion that the younger brother 'Abd was soft hearted; so he decided to meet him first. He realised he had hit the target when 'Abd was deeply impressed and influenced by his speech. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ told him,

"By accepting Islam you will gain both worlds. If you pledge allegiance to Islam you can continue to rule over your country. Our mission is not to grab your power and rule; we wish to make you obey the orders of Allâh Almighty. You can rest assured that if you accept Islam you will continue to rule. Thus you will be successful both in this world and in the Hereafter."

'Abd answered:

"What you say appeals to me. I wish my brother too would realise this. He is very stubborn and in the matter of the power to rule, he is extremely greedy. When did you become a Muslim? We have seen you fighting against the Muslims."

'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ said:

"Allâh has been Gracious to me. If He pleases to give Guidance He makes manifest and clear the heart to the radiance of Islam. Allâh Almighty has given me Divine Guidance to accept Islam, and I am very grateful to Him with my best wishes."

Then he told 'Abd he would like to meet with his brother Jeefer. 'Abd told his brother about the conversation he had with 'Amr bin Al-'Âs. A few days later Jeefer invited 'Amr bin Al-'Âs to his court. He first gave him the letter of the Prophet ﷺ. He read the letter very carefully and then answered very arrogantly:

"And what if I do not accept the invitation of your Prophet?"

'Amr bin Al-'Âs replied that the answer to his question was written at the end of the letter, and requested him to read the letter again.

Jeefer said:

"He was aware that similar letters had been written to rulers of other countries as well; some of them had torn them up and consigned them to wastepaper baskets."

'Amr bin Al-'Âs answered:

"All of them are under our control now, and soon you will see their final end."

At first Jeefer was very furious and the conversation had to come to an end. In fact he even threatened 'Amr bin Al-'Âs and said that they could do their utmost and he was ready to meet their challenge. He would give them better than he got, and he would reply to the letter the following day.

'Amr bin Al-'Âs left the court. Jeefer read the letter again and again. When he came to a particular sentence, he would stop.

"If both you brothers accept Islam, you will continue to rule over your land."

This sentence was instrumental in turning him around completely. When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs went to his court the following day, he adopted a harsh tone, but gradually he softened. Jeefer understood the delicate situation in which he found himself and agreed to accept Islam. He swore the oath of allegiance and entered the fold of Islam. When his subjects heard that he had accepted Islam, all of the inhabitants of 'Omân also rapidly entered the fold of Islam. Thus, without any opposition, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs with his political sagacity played a pivotal role in making the people of 'Omân lovers of Islam.

When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs reached the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and gave him the news that the whole of 'Omân had converted to Islam, he was extremely happy. A few days later he sent 'Amr bin Al-'Âs to educate and train the people of 'Omân in the precepts of Islam. He stayed there for two years, busy teaching the people. During this period, he heard news of the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ. He was overcome by grief and he immediately returned to Al-Madinah, so that he could get orders from the new Caliph about the services he could render for the future glory of Islam.



The tribe of Qadhâ'ah inhabited the valley of Al-Qura, which is situated about three hundred miles from Al-Madinah. The maternal grandparents of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs were from this tribe. The Qadhâ'ah planned to attack the capital of the Muslims, Al-Madinah. When the Prophet ﷺ heard of this he sent an army under the command of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs to stop the enemy within their own territory, considering attack the best form of defence. In military history this tactic has, through every age, played a very important role. In the month of Jamadi-ul-Akhirah in the year 8th Hijrah, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs reached the stream of Salâsal with the Muslim army, and set up camp there. On reaching there he realised that the enemy forces outnumbered the *Mujâhideen* by far. He had three hundred men and thirty horses only. He sent Rafa' bin Makeeth to Al-Madinah with a request to the Prophet ﷺ for reinforcements. He also sent a detailed report about the conditions in the battlefield. The Prophet ﷺ sent two hundred more *Mujâhideen* under the command of Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ; among them were distinguished Companions such as Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar bin Khattâb رضي الله عنهما. The Prophet ﷺ particularly advised the Commanders to avoid mutual disputes and discord.

When the reinforcements reached their destination the question arose as to who would command the combined forces. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs was of the opinion that he should be the Commander-in-Chief as the reinforcements had been sent at his request. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ held the view that by rights he should be the Commander-in-Chief as noble Companions were in his army. But 'Amr bin Al-'Âs

was a very determined man of strong will. It is a virtue in a successful general that once he adopts a position he does not agree to compromise on it. When Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ saw that 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ was inflexible he accepted his command. He remembered the exhortation and advice of the Prophet ﷺ to avoid mutual conflicts in the battlefield.

'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ was very sensitive to the fact that the Prophet ﷺ had chosen him to command the Muslim army on this military expedition, and hence this honour was priceless. The other army had come at his request to help him, hence they should take part in the battle under him. And as the Commander-in-Chief, he felt it was also his responsibility to lead the prayers.

When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ, commanding the *Mujâhideen*, reached the battlefield where the enemy was encamped to oppose them, he immediately launched a massive attack; it was as if they did not know what had hit them. They had no time to organise themselves. Many of them were slain and the rest were forced to run for their lives. He warned the *Mujâhideen* strictly not to chase the fleeing enemy.

It was a bitter winter, but 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ did not allow his men to light any fires to warm themselves. He issued strict orders that no fires were to be lit. 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ was furious at these restrictions, but Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ calmed him down saying that the Prophet ﷺ must have had his own reasons for appointing 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ as Commander-in-Chief. He must have seen some virtue in him to honour him thus.

The *Mujâhideen* insisted that the victorious army have the right to chase the enemy and completely decimate him and finish him off. But the Commander-in-Chief announced that anyone who disobeyed his orders would be severely punished. He issued a serious warning to the troops against pursuing the enemy. After 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ accepted Islam, this was his first expedition as Commander and he returned after gaining a major triumph. When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ gave the Prophet ﷺ an account of the Battle he expressed great happiness. Then he asked him affectionately why he had prevented the *Mujâhideen* from chasing the fleeing enemy. He answered that he

had feared that the *Mujâhideen*, while chasing the enemy might have gone too far into enemy territory and got killed. Since some precious lives could have been destroyed he had issued strict orders against pursuing the enemy. In fact it is the duty of a good general to look after the security and safety of his men.

Then the Prophet ﷺ asked him why he did not allow his men to warm themselves in the cold by lighting fires. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ answered that he had forbidden them because the enemy by the light of the fires would have come to know that their numbers were much smaller in comparison. If they had come to know this they could possibly have attacked again. He said that it was certainly very cold and he too felt liked lighting a fire, but he felt it was too risky to do so. The Prophet ﷺ was happy to hear his logical reasons.

In modern ages too, during war there are official announcements forbidding people to light fires. This concept of a blackout was first introduced by 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ who was known for his military sagacity and foresight. Nobody can question the benefits of this procedure during war. And 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ fulfilled his duty as Commander to perfection in this first expedition of his after accepting Islam.

Another duty of a successful commander is to gauge the strength of the enemy and compare their respective numbers. If necessary he can call up reinforcements without any hesitation. As soon as 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ realised that he was outnumbered he got in touch with the capital, Al-Madinah, and asked for additional troops.

An excellent Commander also understands the responsibilities of his position towards the lives of the men under his command; he should do his utmost for their safety and security. That was the reason why 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ during this military expedition was very cautious in all the steps that he took. He would travel in darkness at night and would rest his army during the daylight hours in some obscure place; thus none could know that he was on the move or even guess his whereabouts. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ had the qualities of political insight, courage, bravery, firmness of resolve, farsightedness and an ability to make quick decisions without faltering. And all these qualities he

possessed to a very high degree of excellence. It was because of these virtues that in the Battle of Salâsal he gained resounding victory. The Prophet ﷺ was so pleased with his triumph that he said:

"O 'Amr! get ready for further victories."

Doubtless these words uttered by the blessed tongue of the Prophet ﷺ, were treasured with pride to the end of life of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs as they acknowledged wholeheartedly the military services rendered by him.

The Prophet ﷺ lived a full life and at the age of sixty-three he passed away to meet his Creator. His closest Companions, the respected Companions who were willing to give their lives for him, were totally devastated by grief. A death pall of silence overshadowed the life of all around him.

Overcome by his deep love for the Prophet ﷺ, 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه raged and said that if anyone said the Prophet ﷺ had died he would chop off their head. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه in order to control the volatile situation displayed exemplary restraint and in grief-stricken tines told the Companions:

"For those who worshipped the Prophet ﷺ, he is dead, but for those who worship the One True Allâh, doubtless He is alive and He will never die. Please be patient, for panic will not help or benefit us. We will move forward on the path shown to us by the Prophet ﷺ. And the system given to us by him will continue."

It was a very critical and testing moment in time for the Companions. Those tribes who had newly entered into the fold of Islam were turning against it, and each one started to move in different directions with contrary viewpoints. Some said that the Prophet ﷺ was not a true prophet; if he had been a true prophet he would not have died. Some said they would pray but would¹ not pay *Zakât*. Thus each tried to go

¹ Man's love of worldly wealth! *Zakât* is one of the five pillars of Islam, and anyone who goes against the basic teachings will be considered an apostate. (Translator's note).

his own way. Some people tried to take advantage of the situation and declared themselves to be prophets. Perfidy, mischief, revolt apostasy - all raised their heads and it seemed as if there was a sudden assault from all sides. In order to and crush these multifarious evils, Abu Bakr Siddiq رض displayed great courage and determination. He organised eleven different armies of Muslims, each with its own banner and with its own commander and sent them in different directions to cut off the heads of this many-headed monster of rebellion and discord.

Khâlid bin Waleed رض was sent to conquer Talihah bin Khawaled to the area of Bazakhah. After defeating him he had orders to proceed to the area of Batâh to crush Malik bin Naweera who was creating problems there. 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl رض was sent to war against Musâilmah Kaththab and 'Amr bin Al-'Âs رض had to deal with the tribe of Qadhâ'ah. Sharjeel bin Hasanah was told to first meet up with 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl رض and crush Musâilmah Kaththab. When he was free of that problem he had to proceed to Hadhramaut, to attack the Kundah tribe who were creating trouble there. Suwaid bin Muqrân رض was told to fight against the Tahamah people who settled in Yemen.

Huthifah bin Muhsin was sent to 'Omân to oppose the chieftain Laqee' bin Malik. Sa'd was sent to battle against the Banu Saleem and Banu Hawâzan. 'Ala' bin Hadhrami was sent to Bahrain. Khâlid bin Sa'eed bin 'Aas was sent in the direction of Syria. Mohajir bin Abu Umayyah was given the task to crush Aswad 'Ansi in Sana'a'. He had also claimed to be a prophet. And similarly, 'Arfajah bin Harshamah was to war against Mahrah people.

These were very daring steps taken by Abu Bakr Siddiq رض which created alarm and consternation all over Arabia. All the eleven armies, which had been delegated to cut off the heads of all those powers rising in rebellion, set off for the destinations assigned to them. After reaching their destinations all of them scored remarkable victories. The rearing head of *Kuffar* was chopped off, the rising evil of rebellion died a natural death and the false prophets were embarrassed by their own bogus claims.

The great General, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, exhibiting his political acumen and unbending faith established total supremacy over the tribe of Qadhâ'ah. He had fought against them and punished them during the life of the Prophet ﷺ also. When these people heard of the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ they had turned against Islam. They refused to pay Zakât. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, knew very well the nature and habits of these people and was also familiar with the roads leading to their area. So Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ sent him to crush them. Following the familiar routes he led his men to attack them. After intense fighting they were again defeated. The great General, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, was blessed with a resounding victory. The tribe again entered the fold of Islam and their Zakât was received and sent to the *Baitul-Mâl* (treasury).

After gaining complete control over the evil mischief of apostasy, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ set in motion a plan to conquer the territories of Iraq, Iran and Syria. He consulted some of the greatest Companions such as 'Umar Farooq, 'Uthmân bin 'Affân, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf, Zubair bin 'Awwam, Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah, Muâth bin Jabal, Zaid bin Thâbit, Abi bin Ka'ab and Talhah رضي الله عنهم.

The great General, Khâlid bin Waleed ؓ, after destroying Musâilmah Kaddâb was residing at Yamâmah. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ was in the same area after getting control over the tribe of Qatha'a. Another prominent General, Mathna bin Hârithah ؓ came down from Iraq, and discussed the situation prevailing there. He said it would be very easy to conquer Iraq and similarly easy to gain control over Iran as well. Khâlid bin Waleed ؓ was summoned for purposes of consultation. After listening to the details of what Mathna bin Hârithah ؓ had to say, he also considered it advisable to advance against Iraq.

After the troops were organised and left to attack Iraq and Iran, preparations were made to organise four armies to advance against Syria. Four great Companions were appointed to assume command over these four armies. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ was sent towards Hamas, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ was sent to Palestine, Sharjeel bin Hasana ؓ set off for Jordan, and Yazeed bin Abu Sufyân ؓ was ordered to advance towards Damascus. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the four forces.

It was the desire of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs to be appointed Chief-of-Staff. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah was given preference over him because he had accepted Islam before him and the Prophet had given him the title of Trustee of the *Ummah*. Due to this both Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما valued him highly. The great General, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, leading an army of nine thousand *Mujâhideen* set off for Palestine. When the Emperor of Rome came to know of the advance of the Muslim army, he got ready an army of a hundred thousand men. He wanted to strike a fatal blow against the Muslim army, such a blow that they could never rise again. When the advance guard of the Roman army consisting of ten thousand men moved forward, 'Abdullâh bin 'Umar was appointed commander of a force of one thousand men and sent to confront him. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs himself, leading his army of eight thousand men attacked from another side. It was such a powerful attack, that the Romans could not face it. In the very first encounter the Roman commander was slain his men lost courage and they retreated. Seven hundred of them were taken prisoners of war, and the Muslim army gained the spoils of war.

After gaining victory in the battlefield, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah giving him the good news. He wrote:

"I am in Palestine now. We faced a very large Roman army. They consisted of a hundred thousand soldiers and we were only nine thousand. Fifteen thousand of their warriors were killed and we lost only hundred and thirty *Mujâhdieen*. We took seven hundred prisoners of war and also a lot of spoils of war. The Roman General was killed in the very first skirmish. If you have any further orders I will be only too happy to obey."

The Commander-in-Chief of the Palestinians, Arthaboon had fled to Egypt from Palestine. When the Caliph went to Baitul- Muqaddas on a tour, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs, suggested to him that an army should be mobilised to subjugate Egypt immediately. If there was a delay in taking steps towards this objective, there was a possibility that the Commander-in-Chief of the Palestinians, Arthaboon, who had taken refuge there, would mobilise an army and challenge the Muslim forces again. He said:

"In my opinion, it is better to plan to conquer Egypt first. No a moment should be lost. If we set out for Egypt right away and take control of the important key positions there, we will avoid a potentially dangerous situation."

But due to certain reasons Caliph could not order the Muslim army to leave immediately. One reason was that some of the northern areas of Syria had not yet been subjugated. There was still a lot of tumult and insurrection against the Muslims there. Because of the massive attacks of Khâlid bin Waleed and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنهم this area was finally brought under Muslim rule. The second reason was that the largest and strongest fortress of the Palestinians, situated on the coastline, was still under the control of the enemy. To leave it unconquered and divert attention to another country would be risky. Amir Mu'âwiyah رضي الله عنهم in a very daring and courageous action finally took this fortress. Thus Muslims became secure and safe from internal insurrections and strife. After this the whole of Arabia fell prey to a terrible famine; when this was over a devastating plague erupted all over Palestine. When they finally found relief from all these natural and man-made disasters and problems, Caliph sent a army under the command of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs رضي الله عنهم to Egypt.

At that time, Egypt was known all over the world for its rich greenery and fertility. Grains, raw cotton and cotton cloth were exported from here. In short, Egypt had become the core of the world's markets of trade and commerce. The sciences, industry, arts and crafts flourished here. Hence it was considered the most attractive world nexus in terms of culture and civilization, industry and trade.

Cargo boats used to ply in the Sea of Rome and Red Sea regularly. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs رضي الله عنهم, travelling along the very same ancient route which, the Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام had used, reached Egypt at the head of his army. This was also the trade route linking Asia and Africa. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs رضي الله عنهم was very familiar with these roads having traveled along them often during his trading days. When the Romans heard of the advance of the Muslim army, they did not think it advisable to confront them in the desert. They knew that the Arab *Mujâhideen* were very good at wars in the desert and Romans were in a state of total panic.

When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs entered Egypt he adopted a practical military strategy. He avoided war in the open battlefield and decided to lay siege to important places. First he lay siege to the border city of Alfara; the siege lasted for two months before the finally subjugated by the Muslim army. Since this city was located in a strategically important place, its capture led to the road to Syria being secured. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs commanded that the ramparts and walls of the city be destroyed; this was in order to prevent the enemy from taking shelter there again. He also ordered that the boats and ships with anchors be burnt; thus the enemy could not use them to cause any harm to the Muslim army. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs had a very small army of *Mujâhideen* and he asked the Caliph for reinforcements. An army of twelve thousand *Mujâhideen* reached Egypt under the command of Zubair bin 'Awâm, and joined the army under the leadership of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs. Conquering rapidly all the other cities as well as other regions, they established complete control over the whole of Egypt.

Alexandria is a famous city of Egypt, which was built on the Sea by Alexander. It is marvel of architecture. It glitters at night because a large quantity of the best quality marble was used to build it. It used to be the second capital of Rome and the world's business and commercial centre to save it from enemy attacks the latest techniques and most modern methods were adopted. Fifty thousand trained warriors were kept ready and alert all the time.

It was located on the best position from the point of view of defence. The ocean was on the north. The Muslim army could enter the city, but it was not an easy task. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs bringing into play his gifts of political sagacity and practical wisdom he used the tactic of blockade, which proved to be very effective.

It is said that three months later, reduced to sheer helplessness, the army came out. (Agreed to sign peace terms.)

There was a very tough battle and chasing and destroying the enemy the Muslim army succeeded in entering the city. As soon as Alexandria was taken the whole of Egypt also was conquered. A special emissary was sent to Al-Madinah to give the news of the victory.

When Caliph 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ heard the news he prostrated to Allâh Almighty in gratitude; it seemed every part of his body was expressive of his joy. He took the messenger home to entertain him to dinner which, consisted of olive oil and bread; and for dessert he served him dates.

After gaining control over the whole of Egypt, 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ decided to build a new city. The new city was planned and designed by Zubair bin Awâm ﷺ and named it Fasthâth. When 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ heard this news, he ordered that this city should be the Capital of Egypt, and he appointed 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ Governor of Egypt. Egypt had been conquered by 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ in the year 20th Hijrah.

The year 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ became the ruler of Egypt, something very strange occurred. The river Nile did not rise during the season and there was no inundation. Some Egyptian citizens brought it to his notice that once a year the river Nile used to dry up. Whenever this happened they would select a beautiful young maiden and pay her parents whatever price they set on her. She was made to wear a very grand dress and expensive jewellery and then thrown into the river Nile. And within moments the river would rise and flood its banks. The moment 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ heard this he said Islam could not tolerate this barbaric and cruel custom.

'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ received a letter from 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ informing him of this strange and barbaric tradition. In reply he sent a letter to the river Nile and instructed 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ to throw the letter in the river. In the letter he wrote:

From 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ to the river Nile:

"O river Nile, if you are flowing by your free will, surely you can stop flowing. If you are flowing by the Will of Allâh Almighty, then I request that divine All-Powerful being to fill you with water and set you flowing."

When 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ gave this letter to the river Nile, within moments its waters started to rise and surge. The Egyptians were struck dumb when they saw this sight.

The great General 'Amr bin Al-'Âs was appointed by the Prophet ﷺ as a Commander-in-Chief and sent to conquer the tribe of Qadhâ'. Further reinforcements were sent later under the command of Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ; they included such great Companions as Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar bin Khattâb رضي الله عنهما who fought under the command of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ in the Battle of Al-salâsal and gained significant victories.

In recognition of his services he was made Governor of Egypt. He carried out far-reaching reforms during his term as Governor. He built new cities, dug new streams and developed agriculture. This last led to an enormous increase in yields. Since he considered wealth to be a blessing from Allâh ﷺ. He loved good food and good clothes. When he sent a special representative to Egypt to reprimand and chide him, he made an inventory of his assets. He was not quite pleased with this, but since it was the order, so he obeyed it. With this special representative he also sent to Al-Madinah a detailed account of all the developmental work being carried out in Egypt; besides these documents he also sent the plans of works which, were yet to be executed. He also suggested that it was essential to provide funds for agricultural reforms. This was why he had given a special rebate in taxes.

Because of the developmental plans of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ Egypt soon became a prosperous country.

'Umar Farooq ؓ was martyred and 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ؓ became Caliph. At that time 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ was the Governor of the Lower Egypt. He was in charge of both Defence and Treasury portfolios. 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ؓ gave charge of the organisation and administration of the Treasury to 'Abdullâh bin Sa'd Abu Sarh, who was Governor of the Upper Egypt. 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ refused to hand over charge; this led to strained relations between them and finally, 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ؓ dismissed 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ. But his skill, intelligence and wisdom always remained dedicated to the interests of Muslims. When there was a rebellion against 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ؓ he sent for 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ؓ to come to Al-Madinah in order to consult with him. This is proof of the fact that he considered him a

farsighted man with an ability to plan and understand complex situations. He advised him to take severe measures against the rebels, but 'Uthmân bin 'Affân was a very soft man and could not take any stern action. The result was the tragic event of his martyrdom.

Amir Mu'âwiyah was the governor of Syria and 'Ali bin Abu Tâlib was the new Caliph. One of the priorities of Amir Mu'âwiyah was to punish the murderers of 'Uthmân bin 'Affân. As a result the sorrowful Wars of Jamal and Safeen occurred. Amir Mu'âwiyah requested 'Amr bin Al-'Âs to come to Syria to consult with him. He was in Palestine at the time. After discussing the matter with his two sons he left for Syria to meet with Amir Mu'âwiyah. He gave him his utmost co-operation and returned to Egypt with an official letter of authority. It was here that he finally passed away.

A great General, a successful statesman, the personification of courage and valour, a fearless soldier who created a tumult in Iraq, Syria and Palestine, he accomplished remarkable progress in Egypt with his skill in planning and his sense of justice. An ever vigilant and cautious leader, he always gave priority to the security and welfare of the men serving under him. As ambassador of the Muslims, he had given crushing replies to the Emperor of Rome, Harqal and to the King of Egypt, Macaucus. His ready answers and his eloquence silenced even the royal courts of the greatest emperors. He lived in a grand style and passed away in the year 43rd of Hijrah on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Usâmah bin Zaid

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“O my Companions! Usâmah is dearer to me than all of you, treat him well.”

Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ

About seven years before migrating to Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companion were the target of terrible cruelty and oppression at the hands of the Quraish. In his efforts to preach the new religion the Prophet ﷺ constantly faced sorrows, troubles and hardships. During this tumultuous period he had one occasion of pure joy which seemed to streak through his life. Someone informed him of the birth of a son to Umm Aimah ﷺ. When he heard this news his face lit up with joy. Can you guess who was the fortunate newborn who brought such happiness to the Prophet ﷺ?

None of the respected Companions were surprised at the fact that the Prophet ﷺ was so happy at this event. This was because they all knew the close connections he had with the parents of the newborn boy. Usâmah's mother was an African lady named Barakat, who became famous as Umm Aimah. She had been a slave who had attended on his mother. When his mother had passed away in his childhood, it was she who looked after him and brought him up. The Prophet ﷺ often used to say that she was like his mother and he counted her among the members of his family. These are the facts about the mother of lucky newborn. His father was Zaid bin Hâarithah, greatly loved by the Prophet ﷺ. He declared him as a adopted son. Throughout his life he had the honour of being the constant companion and close confidante of the Prophet ﷺ.

All the Companions too were overjoyed at the birth of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ. They were happy for the simple reason that they believed what gave happiness to the Prophet ﷺ would prove auspicious for them as well.



The chieftain of the Quraish, Hakim bin Hazzâm once gave a very expensive dress to the Prophet ﷺ as a gift. He had bought it in Yemen for fifty dinars, and this royal robe had been specially made to order for the King of Yemen. This excellent robe he had worn only once on a Friday he gifted to Usâmah ﷺ. And he used to wear this robe morning and evening very happily when he went around visiting his Mohajir and Ansâr friends.

On one occasion Caliph 'Umar ﷺ was distributing stipends from the treasury when his son 'Abdullâh ﷺ came, he gave him his dues. When it was the turn of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ he gave him one and a half times as much as he had given his own son. When Caliph 'Umar ﷺ distributed the stipends from the *Baitul-Mâl*, he would take into consideration the services rendered and sacrifices made in the cause of Islam. He would also take into account the position and status of the person. Naturally 'Abdullâh ﷺ felt that he had a lower position than Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ in the eyes of the Caliph, though in the matter of obedience and commitment to *Jihâd* and abstinence and fear of Allâh Almighty he did not lag behind any other Muslim. He had always sincerely striven to have the honour of being ranked among the foremost Muslims. He did not mind the fact that he got less money, what rankled and worried him was that he was not considered as being one among the front ranks of Muslims.

One day, finally, 'Abdullâh ﷺ he managed to ask his father, Caliph 'Umar ﷺ. He said,

"Father, when you distributed the stipends you gave preference to Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ, though I have taken a greater part in *Jihâd* than him, and supported the Prophet ﷺ more than him."

'Umar Farooq ﷺ told his son:

"The Prophet ﷺ loved Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ deeply, and he loved his father also very much. Why should I not then give him preference? I gave him more because I was following the precedent set by the Prophet ﷺ. It is my duty to bear in mind the preferences of the Prophet ﷺ. Do you not know that his

father was the special servant of the Prophet ﷺ who did not even bother about his parents and his family. He did not want to part from the Prophet ﷺ and go with his parents. His father after a very long search and a tortuous journey finally came to the presence of to take him. He requested the Prophet ﷺ to allow his son to go back with him. The Prophet ﷺ gave him his freedom and Hârithah ﷺ was very happy because he never expected that he would get his son back so easily. He told his son to get ready to leave as his mother was waiting impatiently for him. He refused saying that he could never leave the house of the Prophet ﷺ."

His father could not believe his ears and asked him if he preferred slavery to freedom. His son answered:

"Father, I would sacrifice a thousand freedoms for this slavery, please do not insist. I consider it the greatest honour to live in his house."

Seeing this touching scene, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"You people are witness that Zaid ﷺ is my son and he will be my heir, and I am his heir."

After this all Muslims called him Zaid bin Muhammad (ﷺ). This was stopped with the revelation of the Ayâth in the Noble Qur'ân, with the command that an adopted son should take the name of his father.

Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ was an African and he was dark-skinned and had typical African features. But Islam strictly forbids distinctions based on colour or race. What matters is nobility which is measured by virtue in action and fear of Allâh Almighty, and not by the mere accident of being born in a certain country or family. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"At times a person in a dirty state, covered in dust, appeals to Allâh ﷺ and He listens to him and answers his supplication."

One should not look at Usâmah's colour or his features, one should see his virtuousness, his intelligence, his firmness, his humility, his self-respect, his fear of Allâh Almighty, his passion *Jihâd*, his

hospitality, his love for the Prophet ﷺ and his desire to sacrifice his life for the glory of Islam. These are qualities, which exalt Usâmah ﷺ to the most distinguished position. He had these praiseworthy attributes in mind when he said:

“O my Companions! Usâmah is dearer to me than all others, it is my earnest desire that he be one among you good people; look after him and treat him well.”

Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ was barely twenty years old when the image incarnate of kindness, the Prophet ﷺ, made him Commander of a contingent which included among its numbers such respected Companions as Abu Bakr Siddiq and ‘Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما. Many people in the army were sensitive on this issue that in the presence of many senior Companions such an inexperienced and fresh youth was being made Commander.

And even before the army set out, the Prophet ﷺ passed away, but it had been his dying wish that the army under Usâmah ﷺ should not be stopped on any account, and should set out for their destination as planned.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ ordered the army to leave on its mission under the command of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ as per the dying wish of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Roman Emperor Harqal got the news of the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ. With this news he also received information that the Muslim army, under the command of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ, was at the borders of Syria, ready to attack. He was amazed and overawed, and said that it was a strange nation, which was not deterred from an assault even by the death of its Prophet ﷺ. This daring move scared the Roman army, and the morale of the Emperor of Rome took a downward plunge. Never again did he dare to plan an attack on Arabia via Syria, because the majesty and confidence of the Muslims had intimidated them. The army, which had left under the Command of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ returned safe and sound. The enemy had sustained heavy losses but not a single Muslim *Mujahid* had suffered.

Two years before he passed away the Prophet ﷺ had sent Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ on an expedition, giving him Command over a regiment. He confronted the enemy, won the battle, returned to Al-Madinah and gave the good news to the Prophet ﷺ. He was overjoyed at his success. He asked Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ to sit next to him and tell him the details of the battle, and how he had fared. He answered:

“When the enemy was defeated and started to flee, I followed one of them and caught up with him. I had just tuned my spear on him when he read the *Kalimah* (testimony of Faith) professing faith in Allâh Almighty. But I killed him.”

The Prophet ﷺ was not happy to hear this. He said:

“You killed him even after he said ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh?’ What right did you have to kill a man who recited the testimony of Faith? What will you answer your Maker on the day of Judgement? Alas! Usâmah I am really grieved to hear this.”

Usâmah ﷺ says he kept on repeating these words sorrowfully, and this really worried him. He felt as if all the good deeds he had ever done in his life were wasted. He swore he would never, after that day, attack a person who recited the testimony of Faith, whoever he might be. He remembered this lesson for the rest of his life, because this incident had left a very deep effect on his heart. This, in spite of the fact that the person he had killed had done his very utmost to harm the Muslims. And Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ believed that he had recited the testimony only to save his skin and get breathing space to renew his attack against the Muslims. He fixed this idea in his mind and heart that if one could not kill a person like this man, then one could never ever raise his sword against a *Mo'min*.¹ For the rest of his life he kept this image alive in his heart. When mischief broke out among the Muslims, and 'Ali ﷺ and Amir Muawiya ﷺ opposed each other, Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ went into seclusion. He loved 'Ali ﷺ deeply but he refused to fight beside him in this battle and lift his sword against anyone, because the opponents were Muslims. He wrote a letter to 'Ali ﷺ saying:

¹ A true Muslim by name is, as well as in deed.

"If you had been in the jaws of a bloodthirsty lion I would have entered the fray and joined forces with you, but in this matter I beg you to excuse me. No Muslim can be the target of my sword; I still remember the lesson learnt by the Prophet ﷺ when he heard the news that I had killed a man who had recited the testimony, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh.'"

When he did not go out of his house during this troubled time many of his friends tried to get him to fight against Amir Mu'âwiyah رضي الله عنه, but he bluntly refused. He said:

"I will definitely not fight against anyone who admits and acknowledges that 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh.' This is my final decision."

One of his companions quoted the *Ayâth*:

"And fight them until there is no more *Fitnah* (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allâh) and (all and every kind of) worship is for Allâh (Alone). But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against *Az-Zâlimûn* (the polytheists, and wrong-doers). (2:193)

He answered that this command of Allâh Almighty was to fight against the *Kuffâr*, and these all Muslims had practised and their fight should and would continue until the religion of Allâh Almighty overcame all.

During the Battle of Uhud Usâmah bin Zaid رضي الله عنه set out for *Jihâd* with boys of his age. Some of them were accepted for *Jihâd*, but some were rejected due to being underage. He was one of among the latter. When he returned he was literally weeping because he had not been given a chance to fight under the flag of the Prophet ﷺ.

In the Battle of Ahzab, when he set out to volunteer for *Jihâd*, he started walking on his toes so as to appear taller and thus older. He feared that on this occasion too he would be rejected because of his

age. When the Prophet ﷺ saw this he smiled and allowed him to participate. When he first went into the battlefield for *Jihâd* he was only fifteen years old.

When the Muslims faced defeat in the Battle of Hunnain, some of the Companions like Usâmah bin Zaid, Abbas, Abu Sufyân رضي الله عنه and a few others remained steady and resolute in the battlefield. The Prophet ﷺ kept on repeating this message to the enemy.

"I am the Prophet ﷺ, and this is not a lie,
I am the son of 'Abdul Muttalib."

In the Battle of Moatah Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ fought under the command of his father, Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ. He was less than eighteen years old at the time. He saw with his own eyes his father martyred in the battle, but did not lose courage; on the other hand he continued to fight under Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ until he too was slain. Then 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ took over command, but soon he too was martyred. Then Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ took over, and obeying his instructions, Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ remained stubbornly in the battlefield. Using brilliant military strategy, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ extricated the Muslim army from the jaws of the Roman forces, and succeeded in getting them out safe and sound. Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ buried his martyred father in Syria and rode back to Al-Madinah on his horse.

In the month of Safar in the year 11th Hijrah the Prophet ﷺ commanded the Muslims to prepare the army to wage war against the Romans. Among the soldiers were such notable Companions as Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq, Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه. Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ was named commander of this army by the Prophet ﷺ, even though he was barely twenty years old. He was told to subjugate the area of Balqa'a; the

army was still preparing to leave when the Prophet ﷺ fell ill. When his condition became serious the army did not leave. Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ says:

“When he ﷺ became very ill a few of my companions and I went to look after him. He was very quiet due to the severity of his illness. He raised his hand and keep it on my shoulder; I understood that he was praying for me.”

Soon after this he passed away. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ was chosen to be the new Caliph. All the Companions swore the oath of allegiance on his palm. The first thing he did after being chosen Caliph was to order the Muslim army under Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ to proceed to Syria as had been ordered by the Prophet ﷺ. Some of the Companions felt that it would be better, if army were delayed. The Ansâr asked ‘Umar Farooq ﷺ to talk to Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ. If he insisted on sending the troops immediately he should inform him that in their opinion an older and more experienced person should be appointed in the place of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ. When Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ heard this from ‘Umar Farooq ﷺ he became furious and told him:

“O Ibn Khattâb, it is really a shame that you are advising me to dismiss Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ who was appointed by the Prophet ﷺ. I swear by Allâh Almighty that this can never be done!”

When ‘Umar Farooq ﷺ went back to the Companions they asked him what had the Caliph had said. He replied that there was no option but to accept Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ as the Commander. He regretted that because of them the Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ had got annoyed with him.

When the army left under the command of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ, Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ walked for some distance with them in order to see them off. Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ was astride his horse and told him:

“O Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ either you get on horseback or I get off and walk with you.”

Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ answered:

“Neither will you get off your horse, nor will I get on horseback. Is it not an honour for me to walk along some part of Allâh Almighty’s way and get dusty and dirty?”

A little way out of the city of Al-Madinah he said goodbye to Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ and the *Mujâhideen*, and said:

“Follow the instructions given to you by the Prophet ﷺ.”

Then in a whisper he told him:

“If you do not take ‘Umar Farooq ﷺ with you it would be better, because it is very important for him to be here at the centre with me.”

Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ agreed with his opinion and left ‘Umar Farooq ﷺ stayed back in Al-Madinah in order to assist him.

Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ left with the Muslim army and made every possible effort that he had been instructed by the Prophet ﷺ to make. In the first stage they swept through the lands of Syria, and the areas of Balqa'a and Wardoom in Palestine. And the fear and awe of Rome that held sway in their hearts vanished.

After achieving a great triumph, Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ got on his father’s horse and very grandly rode safely to Al-Madinah with a lot of booty. Word spread all round among people that up to that day no other army had brought back as much booty as the army of Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ.

As time passed Muslims started appreciating and valuing Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ more and more. And all this grandeur and glory he achieved was due to his loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ.

Caliph ‘Umar ﷺ fixed a larger stipend from the treasury for Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ than for his own son. ‘Abdullâh ﷺ objected and said Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ was getting five thousand dinar whereas he was

getting only two thousand. And this in spite of the fact that his father occupied a lower status than his own father that is, Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه. And Usâmah bin Zaid رضي الله عنه was in a lower position than he in terms of the number of battles he had taken part in. Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه told him it was a shame he did not know that the father of Zaid رضي الله عنه was dearer to the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم than his own father, and he himself was dearer to the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم than 'Abdullâh رضي الله عنه. Hearing this he kept quiet and accepted the stipend as fixed by the Caliph.

Whenever Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه met him he would happily call out to him:

"Welcome my leader!"

People questioned his behaviour, but he asked them if they did not know that he had been appointed commander of an army by the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم, in which, he himself had served as an ordinary soldier.

Mother of the believers 'Âishah رضي الله عنها narrates how a woman belonging to the tribe of Banu Makhzoom had committed the crime of theft. The case was brought to the court of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم. When the Banu Makhzoom realised that if the punishment according to *Shariah*, of cutting off her hand, would be meted out to her, they felt it would be a disgrace and a matter of shame for all of them. After mutual consultation they decided to approach Usâmah bin Zaid رضي الله عنه and persuade him to intercede with the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم on her behalf, as he was exceptionally fond of him. Maybe with his intercession the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم would not impose the punishment.

Bearing in mind the embarrassment, shame and anxiety of the Banu Makhzoom he approached the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم and pleaded with him on behalf of the woman. Since this was a clear, explicit and daring interference in the penal code imposed by Allâh Almighty, the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم was furious and said:

"Usâmah how did you dare to even dream of meddling with the penal laws of Allâh صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم?" He continued, "This same defect was found in the Bani Israeel. If a prominent person was found guilty of any crime, it was ignored. And if any commoner was found guilty of a crime then penal laws would be imposed on

him. This is the reason why these peoples were destroyed. I swear by the Being Who has control over my very existence that if my own daughter Fathmah (رضي الله عنه) were to commit the crime of theft, I would cut off even her hand."

Even though the Prophet ﷺ loved Usâmah ﷺ deeply, it was the love of Allâh Almighty which, took precedence and overcame all other considerations.

If an expensive gift would given to the Prophet ﷺ he accept¹ it and then pass it on to Usâmah ﷺ. As in the case of the very expensive robe given by Hakim Ibn Hazzam to the Prophet ﷺ; he accepted it, wore it, and then passed it on to Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ.

Dahiya Kalbi presented a costly dress to the Prophet ﷺ. This too he gave away to Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ, who in this respect proved to be a very lucky man, in that he was the favourite of the Prophet ﷺ. What greater honour could one wish for – to be loved by the Prophet ﷺ who himself was loved by the Allâh Almighty?

At the time the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ was barely eighteen or twenty years old. He did not have a chance to spend much time with the Prophet ﷺ after he gained maturity, yet people used to refer to him and ask him about the Prophet's opinions on certain matters. For example, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ asked Usâmah ﷺ to narrate any instructions he remembered of the Prophet ﷺ regarding plague. Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ told him that the Prophet ﷺ had said:

"Plague is a punishment and a torment and was sent by Allâh ﷺ on a certain group of Israelites. So, if you hear of any place afflicted by plague, avoid going there. And if you are already in a place attacked by plague do not try to escape from there."

¹ It is a *Sunnah* to accept a gift as it increases mutual affection in the hearts of both.

On one occasion Usāmah bin Zaid ﷺ cut off a date palm growing in his orchard and removed its pith. His companions were surprised that he had destroyed such an expensive tree. He told them his beloved mother had wanted the pith, and if she asked him for something he would always try to fulfil her request as long as it was in his power to do so. It did not matter if he had to bear heavy losses in the process. In comparison with her stature and the value of services rendered this date palm meant nothing to him.

Usāmah bin Zaid ﷺ was a man who had gained the love of a man who himself had gained the love of the Creator and Sustainer of the world. In the very flower of his youth he had the honour to perform the worthy task of leading the forces of the Muslim *Mujāhideen*. He was a man who had gained respect and prestige among his peers, both in the era of the Prophet ﷺ and during the era of the caliphates. This great General died at the age of sixty during the last days of the caliphate of Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ at a place near Al-Madinah called Jaraf, answering.

Here I come O Allâh Almighty at the call to eternal life.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

‘Ikrimah bin Abi Hishâm

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Very soon ‘Ikrimah will arrive as a foreign
Mo’mîn.”

‘Ikrimah bin Abi Hishâm ﷺ

A highly respected chieftain of the tribe of Ban Makhzoum, descended of a proud and noble lineage, ‘Ikrimah bin Abi Hishâm was respected deeply for his magnificent personality and he led an enviable life from the point of view of affluence and wealth. Born fortunate, he was also skilled in the use of all kinds of weapons, whether it be the bow and arrow or the musket. He was such a fast runner that even the fastest of horses could not keep up with him. He was a bosom companion of Sa’d bin Abu Waqâs and Maṣ’ab bin ‘Umeir رضي الله عنهما, but the light of Islam had entered their hearts and irradiated them long before he pledged allegiance to Islam. The biggest hurdle in his path was his father. Do you know who his father was? He was the chieftain of the Quraish, ‘Umeir bin Hisham, who nurtured a deep-rooted enmity, resentment and hatred for Islam and Muslims. It was for this reason that he got the nickname of Abu Jahl. He had reached unparalleled heights of cruelty and tyranny in his arrogant loathing of Muslims. The new converts to Islam who were humble, unassuming, patient and sincere became the object of his new inventive experiments in the torturous punishments which were meted out to them. In arrogance, haughtiness and pride, cruelty and oppression, deceit and hypocrisy he seemed to excel the devil himself. He picked out the Muslims targeting them for his persecution and injustice, but could not succeed in turning them away from the worship of the Allâh Alone. He would mercilessly drag Bilal ﷺ naked on the scorching sands and Khabbab bin Aratt ﷺ was made to lie on burning embers. The great and noble lady Somayyah was also tortured and oppressed because of her sincere love of the Allâh.

The mastermind behind all these devilish schemes was Abu Jahl. When the Prophet ﷺ saw the pitiable state of his loyal followers he ordered them to migrate. Faithful Companions, obeying their beloved leader travelled first towards Ethiopia. But Abu Jahl would not let them live in peace even there and sent his emissaries to the Emperor Najâshi in order to turn him against the Muslims. And when these pure souls emigrated to Al-Madinah and tried to make it a haven of peace, he collected powerful armed troops and set out to decimate this small body of Muslims, and wipe them off the face of the earth.

When the Prophet ﷺ heard that the cyclone of the Quraish cruelty was heading towards Al-Madinah, he also took his faithful followers and reached a place called Badr. It was here that the first encounter between Allâh and Evil took place. It was a memorable battle and came to be known as the Battle of Badr. Abu Jahl swore by the idols of Lât and 'Azza that he would not go back to Makkah until he had wiped out the Muslims from the earth.

The Quraish were unduly proud of their military strength in numbers and arms and carousing before the battle, having forgotten there was an Allâh Almighty; on the other hand, the Prophet ﷺ with his unarmed followers was prostrating before Allâh Almighty and offering supplications to Him. He was pleading that if on that day the handful of Muslims were killed, then there would not be anyone left to remember the One True Allâh and the surface of the earth would be deprived of the beautiful act of prostration.

The two armies faced off each other in the battlefield of Badr and intense fighting broke out. The *Mujâhideen* advanced fired by the spirit of *Jihâd*. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf رضي الله عنهما draws the picture of an astounding scene he witnessed during the battle. Mu'az and Mu'waz رضي الله عنهما, two young *Mujâhideen* came to him and asked him in a very secretive manner who was Abu Jahl, and where he could be found. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf رضي الله عنهما was surprised and asked them what work they had with him. He was a chieftain, a very cruel oppressor and a terrible enemy. They answered very innocently that they had heard that he abused their beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and they had sworn that they would either send him packing to hell or die as martyrs in the attempt. They were determined not to return empty-

handed from the battlefield. Just at that moment Abu Jahl appeared, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf says:

"I pointed him out to the young *Mujâhideen* saying that was the target they had been looking for. Immediately they heard this they moved towards him swiftly. Their attack was so sudden that Abu Jahl was taken completely by surprise. He could not control his movements and was thrown down from his horse. 'Ikraimah heard his father scream; neither Lât nor 'Auzah could help him; 'Ikrimah saw with his own eyes his experienced father overcome by the attack of these two youthful *Mujâhideen* and fall to the ground. Their spears were drinking up his blood and 'Ikrimah himself was helpless. When he saw his father's condition the urge for revenge drove him to attack Mua'az from behind with his sword. He succeeded in slashing his right arm. Since this arm was hanging down it was troubling him. Mua'az daringly pressed on it with his foot and wrenched it off. Praise be to Allâh Almighty, who blessed him with such courage at such a young age!"

Leaving the dead body of his father, 'Ikrimah fled from the scene. And in the twinkling of an eye the power and omnipotence of the Quraish in their sphere dwindled into insignificance into the dust of the battlefield of Badr. The Muslims threw the body of Abu Jahl with those of the other polytheists into the well, and threw dust over it. Thus, in this first encounter between Good and Evil, Virtue triumphed and Evil was routed and completely demoralised. The arrogant, stiff-necked Abu Jahl was kissing the dust in Badr.

'Ikrimah's appetite for revenge increased manifold times. Earlier his enmity towards Islam had been due to the exalted position and status of his father. And now the passion for revenge increased this antipathy so that it reached its peak. 'Ikrimah and his friends whose near and dear ones had been slain at Badr, ignited the fire of vengeance in the hearts of the polytheists and of the survivors of those killed in the Battle of Badr. Finally, things came to such a pass that the Battle of Uhud took place. 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl set off towards

Uhud. He took his wife Umm Hakeem with him so that she could stand at the rear of the army ranks with the womenfolk of the other families who had suffered losses and beat the war-drums and excite the emotions of the young warriors of the Quraish. They would fight with determination with the encouragement of the womenfolk and not flee the field of battle. The Quraish had placed Khâlid bin Waleed on the right of the armed forces and 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl ﷺ on the left. In the Battle of Uhud these two warriors created havoc among the ranks of the Muslims and gained the upper hand. They gained great success that day and Abu Sufyân declared that they had avenged the defeat at Badr.



The Prophet ﷺ knew the psychology and mindset of the Arab tribes and was ever alert to the possibility that the tribes might unite against the Muslims and attack them because of the Arab tradition of standing by one's kinsmen. The Quraish of Makkah were furious because of the defeat suffered at Badr. The two famous tribes among the Jews, Banu Qainoqa' and Banu Nadheer were incensed at being thrown out of Al-Madinah; the Banu Hatheel and Banu Ghafîf were envious enemies of Islam and wanted to destroy Islam and all Muslims. In short, each tribe was determined to take revenge against the Muslims. They resented the fact that a man who had left Makkah empty-handed, had in the short span of five years established himself so firmly and strongly in Al-Madinah. At this point, in time with his faithful band of followers, he was always ready to challenge any power. Bearing all these factors in mind, Abu Sufyân organised a united front and besieged Al-Madinah. When the Prophet ﷺ came to know of this he had a trench dug outside the city to act as an obstacle and pre-empt an attack by Abu Sufyân and his confederates. The siege lasted for many days; the women were gathered in the huge manor of the poet laureate of the Muslim *Ummah*, Hassân bin Thâbit ﷺ, so that they were secured from facing any problems. Among these ladies was Safiah bint 'Abdul-Mutallib. When she saw a Jew scouting the area outside the manor, she took a rod of the tent and killed him on the spot. This overawed the enemy who was shaken by her daring.

One of the ends of the trench was a little narrow; taking advantage of this, 'Umar bin 'Abdod, Dhrrar bin Khattâb, 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jhal and others rapidly jumped across the trench on their horses.

'Ali bin Abi Tâlib and 'Umar Farooq blocked their way. 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib challenged the hero 'Amr bin 'Abdod and with his sword cut him up. When Dharâr bin Khattâb and 'Ikrimah saw the fate of their advance into the ranks of their enemy, they fled from the scene thinking discretion was the better part of valour!

On the day that Makkah was conquered, the Quraish were overawed and did not dare to come face to face with the Muslims. They decided not to hinder them or put obstacles in their path on this day and allowed them to enter Makkah. The polytheists of the city gained the advantage that the Prophet declared a general amnesty and made it clear that only those people would be opposed who dared to challenge the Muslims. 'Ikrimah got together some young men of the city and set out to oppose the troops of Muslims who were under the command of Khâlid bin Waleed, but they were unsuccessful and had to flee. Among these was their leader, 'Ikrimah. He felt extremely embarrassed and ashamed that day; he felt he could not continue to live in Makkah; even though the Prophet had declared a general amnesty. The Prophet had, however commanded that some of the enemies of Islam should be sought out and slain even if they were hiding among the curtains of the Ka'bah. The name of 'Ikrimah was one of those on that list, so he slipped out quietly fearing for his life. Since he could not think of any safe haven of refuge in Makkah, he decided to head towards Jeddah and then go on to Yemen. Bidding goodbye to his hometown, he set out. This was the very same city where he had full authority just a short time before; he and his father, Abu Jhal, had dominated over the city and its people. None of them had dared to disobey or rebel. It now seemed as if the earth of Makkah had slipped from under their feet, and its citizens were alien to him. Even the familiar streets and marketplaces seemed to disown him, and he thought it best to flee stealthily to Yemen.

Makkah had been conquered in a peaceful manner, and general pardon given to all. Taking advantage of this situation, the wife of 'Ikrimah, Umm Hakeem, Hindah bint 'Utbah and a few other ladies

decided to enter the fold of Islam. They approached to the Prophet ﷺ to ask for forgiveness and swear allegiance to Islam in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ himself. When these ladies entered the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, his favourite daughter, Fatimah رضي الله عنها and two of the *Ummahât-ul-Mo'mineen* were with him. Speaking from behind her veil in a very formal and eloquent style, Hindah bint 'Utbah said:

"O Prophet ﷺ, thanks be to Allâh Almighty, who gave victory to His beloved servant. You deserve congratulations on this victory. I appeal to you for mercy on the basis of our kinship and accept Islam with all sincerity."

Then removing her veil from her face, she revealed her identity, saying she was Hindah bint 'Utbah.

The Prophet ﷺ, a Mercy to Mankind welcomed her and said he was very happy to hear these cordial words of good wishes from her. It was also propitious that a soft corner had been created in her heart for Islam.

Hindah said:

"Before these auspicious moments I found intense feelings of hatred for you as well as for Islam. But all of a sudden love has taken the place of hatred. Now you and your mission are dearer to me than everything else in the world."

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"May Allâh ﷺ increase and prosper these pure emotions, ideas and feelings in your heart."

Hindah bint 'Utbah then pledged that she would follow the path of allegiance to Islam. After her the wife of 'Ikrimah, Umm Hakeem came forward and greeted him with the greeting of *Salam* and swore allegiance to Islam. Then, requesting the Prophet ﷺ:

"Ikrimah has fled to Yemen out of fear that your loyal followers may put him to the sword; please give us the opportunity to thank you and grant him a safe haven. You are the standard bearer of mankind, the greatest and best of Allâh Almighty's creations. 'Ikrimah is a useful man and I will try my

utmost to bring him to the straight path, as I am well acquainted with his habits."

On seeing her grievous state, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"From this day forward 'Ikrimah is granted safe conduct and can return. He will not be questioned or taken to task."

Having got the guarantee of safe conduct from the Prophet ﷺ, Umm Hakeem set out to search for 'Ikrimah with her Roman slave. On the way this man fell a prey to lust and was tempted to have a relationship with her and began to flirt with her. Since she was an extremely intelligent and smart woman, she played for time by seeming to give in to his advances till they reached the city of an Arab tribe. After introducing herself, she told the chieftain about the predicament in which she found herself. The chieftain was enraged at the temerity of the slave and had him bound in chains. Having gained freedom from this unexpected problem, she set out alone and finally met up with her husband on the shores of Tahâmah. She told him:

"'Ikrimah, believe me I have met the standard bearer of the creation of the world, the Messenger for all mankind, the perfect model of civility and the preacher of love and affection, the Prophet ﷺ. He has displayed remarkable mercy and affection and agreed to give you a safe haven. Doubtless this is our good fortune, and we cannot thank Allâh Almighty adequately for His Kindness."

Umm Hakeem told him not to endanger himself and to take advantage of his good luck and accompany her. Her husband asked her if she had spoken to the Prophet ﷺ herself. She answered that she had spoken herself as she sympathised with him and was his well-bred. She wished to make his future brighter and had risked her life and faced great dangers to follow him and finally find him.

Umm Hakeem tactfully convinced him and he agreed to return with her. On their journey back she related to him the experience she had had with the Roman slave and how she had duped him and had him caught. 'Ikrimah was furious and wanted to stop on the way to Makkah. When he saw this immoral rogue he lost his temper and killed the man, saying:

"You are a traitor who dared to take advantage of my absence and raided my home. You unfortunate creature you are mass of filthy garbage and a burden on this earth. It is far better that you are buried under this earth rather than walk upon it. You go to Hell and lick your wounds there for all of eternity."

After dispatching this man he set out for Makkah. On the way he wished to enjoy his marital rights with his wife; she told him this would not be possible until he too accepted Islam and purified himself from the filth of paganism and polytheism. She refused to allow him to even touch her.

He was very surprised to hear this unexpected reply. He realised that a very wide gulf separating them had been created. When 'Ikrimah and Umm Hakeem neared Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ told his Companions who were seated around him:

"Very soon 'Ikrimah will arrive as a foreign *Mo'min*¹ Muslim, do not abuse his father. If you curse a dead man, you will only cause grief and pain to his surviving family members and your curses will not reach the dead man."

And very soon 'Ikrimah and Umm Hakeem entered the presence of the Prophet ﷺ. When the Messenger ﷺ saw 'Ikrimah he expressed great happiness and stepped forward to welcome him. He then sat down, but 'Ikrimah remained standing respectfully, and with trembling lips said:

"Umm Hakeem tells me that you have forgiven me and given me a guarantee of safety."

The Prophet ﷺ replied:

"She is indeed speaking the truth when she says that we have guaranteed your safety. Be assured that none of our followers can cause you any harm or injury. You can lead a life free of worries and fear; this is a refuge for you, where you can live in ease and happiness."

¹ A true Muslim; in words and deeds.

When 'Ikrimah bin Abi Hishâm ﷺ heard these affectionate words he breathed a sigh of relief and asked the Prophet ﷺ in very gentle tones what he was inviting people to accept. The Prophet ﷺ replied:

"The crux of my teaching is that None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and that Muhammad is his Messenger and Slave. This is the core and central point of my invitation to Islam."

'Ikrimah replied:

"Certainly all these points are based on facts. I swear by Allâh Almighty that even before you started preaching you were a standard bearer of Truth and taught honesty and integrity."

Saying this he put forward his palm and swore the oath of allegiance to Islam:

"I proclaim that none other is worthy of worship except Allâh ﷺ and you are the Messenger of Allâh Almighty."

Then he said:

"Please tell me O Prophet of Allâh what I should say."

The Prophet ﷺ answered that he should repeat after him the words he was about to utter:

"I bear witness that, None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and that Muhammad is his Messenger and Slave."

Then the Prophet ﷺ said that he should also take an oath calling upon all those present and Allâh Almighty as witnesses, that from that day forward he was a Muslim *Mujâhid* and *Mohâjir*.

'Ikrimah ﷺ took the oath sincerely with all due earnestness. The Prophet ﷺ was so pleased that he said:

"'Ikrimah ﷺ you may ask for anything you wish. I am prepared to give you anything that I have given any other Companion."

'Ikrimah bin Abi Hishâm was in tears and replied,

"O Prophet of Allâh ﷺ! Please forgive all the acts of enmity and hostility which, I committed against your august person in my

past life, and also excuse me for all the opposition that I put up against you during the days when I was a disbeliever. Please pardon me for all the rude words or acts I indulged in, either in your absence or in your presence. I am very depressed, repentant and ashamed of all that I did, and am sinking in the bottomless ocean of regret; please forgive me for the sake of Allâh Almighty and forget the past."

As he kept on repeating these words he was tortured like a fish thrown out of water. Seeing his pitiable condition, the Benefactor of all Mankind, the Prophet ﷺ prayed:

"O Allâh Almighty, please forgive 'Ikrimah for the enmity and hostility he bore against me, and forgive his mistakes and sins committed to hinder the establishment of Your Divine World order, and the efforts he made to (Allâh forbid) extinguish the spread of Divine Radiance and Light. O Allâh Almighty, please forgive him for trying to malign and disgrace me either in my presence or my absence. I forgive him, please forgive him."

The face of 'Ikrimah ﷺ lit up with joy on hearing this supplication of the Prophet ﷺ, and he exclaimed fervently:

"O Prophet ﷺ, I swear by Allâh Almighty, I will now spend for Allâh Almighty twice the amount that I spent to prevent people from walking on the straight path of Divine Guidance. I used to fight wars to prevent people from accepting the religion of Allâh Almighty, Islam. From now on I will fight with my heart and soul in the wars of *Jihâd* to bring people to the Divine path of Allâh Almighty."

Now 'Ikrimah was very blessing. The silvery rays of Islam had brought brightness and light into his dark life. His callousness had given way to softness and his beautiful large eyes reflected this change when tears flowed down his cheeks. There was a time when hatred and rancour against Islam were at their peak in his heart, and now Islam became the most perfect way of life in his code of values. There was a time when the aim and object of his life was to harm and

injure the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, and now even at a nod from him he was willing to sacrifice his life which he owed to his magnanimity and graciousness.

When 'Ikrimah ﷺ had accepted Islam in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ he had sworn that he could sacrifice his life for the success of Islam. These were not empty words, he proved his sincerity in action. After accepting Islam he remained in the forefront of every *jihâd* (battlefield), so that he could to some extent at least compensate for his past. In the Battle of Yarmook he leapt towards the field of battle just as on a scorching hot day a thirsty man rushes forward when he finds child water. During this battle Muslims came under extreme pressure from the enemy, the forward advance of the horses was blocked, 'Ikrimah ﷺ got down from his steed and broke the sheath of his sword. Then he rushed into the ranks of the Romans and began to fight fearlessly. When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ saw this sight he quickly stepped forward saying:

“'Ikrimah do not do this; if you are martyred it will be a great loss for the Muslims.”

But 'Ikrimah ﷺ, impassioned by the spirit of *Jihâd*, replied:

“Khâlid! Please step back; you accepted Islam before me and have succeeded in attaining a lofty status. You are aware of the fact that my father and I were the strongest and worst enemies of Islam, and did not leave any stone unturned to harm and damage it. Just leave me alone today, so that I can compensate for my sins and absolve myself.”

Then in even more impassioned tones he said:

“How can I, who have been most active in many situations in opposing our beloved Prophet ﷺ and his loyal followers, turn my back on the Romans and flee, can never be and is absolutely impossible.”

Then he asked in loud and inspiring tones, who would that day swear loyalty to death? Moved by his fervent appeal, his paternal uncle, Hârith bin Hishâm, and four hundred other loyalist of Islam swore fealty on his palm.

From behind the tent of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, they launched a powerful attack on the enemy and routed them, exemplifying how braves and heroes fight in wars. When the Muslims achieved a glorious victory in the Battle of Yarmook, a few seriously injured *Mujâhideen* were lying down, exhausted and spent. Among them was Hârith bin Hishâm, 'Ayâsh bin Abu Rabi'ah and 'Ikrimah bin Abi Hishâm ﷺ. Hârith bin Hishâm ﷺ asked for some water, and when it was brought to him he noticed that 'Ikrimah was looking towards it. Hârith ﷺ requested that it be given to him first. When it was brought to him, 'Ikrimah ﷺ realized that 'Ayâsh bin Abu Rabi'ah ﷺ was looking longingly at it. He felt that the need and thirst of his brother in Islam was greater than his. He asked that the water should be given to 'Ayâsh bin Abu Rabi'ah ﷺ, rather than to him. By the time the water was taken to 'Ayâsh ﷺ, his soul had left his body. And when the water was taken back to the two former Companions, their souls too had soared to their beloved Allâh Almighty, after displaying a remarkable spirit of sacrifice and forbearance. Allâh Almighty was surely pleased with them and they must have been, by the Grace of Allâh Almighty, in Paradise enjoying the divine water from the Lake of *Kauther* - whiter than milk, colder than ice, sweeter than honey and more headily perfumed than saffron - from the hand of the Prophet ﷺ himself. After having this divine water, they would not feel thirsty on the fearful Day of Judgement, and finally they would be in the evergreen gardens of Janna for all Eternity.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Mathna bin Hârithah

Sheebâni

Qais bin 'Asim Tamimi said:

"Mathna bin Hârithah  was not a Commoner; he was, in fact, a young chieftain of the Banu Sheebân tribe and a famous warrior of Arabia."

Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni ﷺ

'Ali bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ narrates that one day the Prophet ﷺ set out to invite some of the Arab tribes to accept Islam and the way of the Oneness of Allâh 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنهما accompanied him. At one spot they saw a group of people sitting and chatting. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ and said:

"O Prophet of Allâh, ﷺ these are very important people and connected to a very honourable and distinguished tribe. Worldly power and glory reaches its zenith in the members of this tribe."

At that time the foremost leaders of the Banu Sheebân, Mafrooq bin 'Amr, Hani bin Qabeesa, No'man bin Shareek and Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni were present. Mafrooq bin 'Amr was the best orator and debater among them.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ asked how many people were in their tribe. Mafrooq answered promptly that there were a thousand men and this number could not be overcome in the battlefield. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ then asked how they fared in their battles with the enemy. Mafrooq answered that in the battlefield our fury at its peak. They loved their horses so much that they gave them preference over their children; their weapons were dearer to them than any worldly wealth or property. In the field of battle the balance tilted at times in their favour and at other times in favour of the enemy. Then turning towards the Prophet ﷺ he asked him what is your message. The Prophet ﷺ answered:

"My message is that 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh Alone.'"

The Quraish have chosen the path of denial and defiance. They have decided to rebel against Allâh and His Messenger. I am very hopeful that you will support me.

“Mafrooq asked if he had any other message besides this.”

The Prophet ﷺ then recited the following Verses:

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): ‘Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from: Join not anything in worship with Him; be good and dutiful to your parents; kill not your children because of poverty’ — We provide sustenance for you and for them Come not near to *Al-Fawâhîsh* (shameful sins and illegal sexual intercourse) whether committed openly or secretly; and kill not anyone whom Allâh has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islâmic law). This He has commanded you that you may understand. And come not near to the orphan’s property, except to improve it, until he (or she) attains the age of full strength; and give full measure and full weight with justice. — We burden not any person, but that which he can bear — And whenever you give your word (i.e., judge between men or give evidence), say the truth even if a near relative is concerned, and fulfil the Covenant of Allâh. This He commands you that you may remember. And verily, this is My straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His path. This He has ordained for you that you may become *Al-Muttaqûn*.” (6:151-153)

When the wise intellectuals of Banu Sheebân heard these Verses they swore by Allâh Almighty that these were not the words uttered by a man belonging to this world. They were certainly divine in origin; they were sweet, yet simple, eloquent and effective. Then he said that they had really enjoyed listening to the Verses and wished to hear some more of the same and gain more pleasure by losing themselves in the beauty of the Divine Verses. Prophet ﷺ recited this Verse:

“Verily, Allâh enjoins *Al-'Adl* (i.e., justice) and *Al-Ihsân* (i.e., to be patient in performing your duties to Allâh, totally for Allâh’s sake), and giving (help) to kith and kin, and forbids *Al-Fâshâ'* (i.e. all evil deeds), and *Al-Munkar* (i.e. all that is prohibited by

Islâmic law), and *Al-Baghy* (i.e. all kinds of oppression). He admonishes you, that you may take heed." (16:90)

When Mafrooq heard these Verses he exclaimed involuntarily:

"I swear by Allâh Almighty that never before in my life have I heard more excellent words which exhort human beings to follow the highest moral code of conduct and encourage noble deeds."

Then turning towards the Prophet ﷺ, he said:

"This is Hâni bin Qabisah, who has the same faith and beliefs as me. Would you like to listen to what he has to say?"

The Prophet ﷺ affectionately accepted his offer, and asked Hâni to say what he had to say. Hâni said:

"I have listened closely and attentively to all that you had to say. Every point that you made is based on truth and righteousness. The Verses that you have recited are very moving and effective. But we can come to no final conclusion so quickly. We would like to discuss things with the other members of our tribe. Hasty decisions often lead to unpleasant after effects. Please give us the time to think and consider. Mathna, the hero of our tribe, the enviable soldier of our tribe, and the pride of our people would also like to say something to you."

The Prophet ﷺ turned his attention towards Mathna, who said:

"I heard your speech and very much liked what I heard. Your words leave a very deep impression, but it is not within our power to accept your invitation right away. We have a treaty with the Iranian Empire that we will neither accept any new movement nor will we assist the person initiating any such movement. It is quite possible that the Iranian Empire may not accept your invitation to a new faith. If this happens it can cause a great deal of trouble for us. Of course if anybody in Arabia places obstacles in your path or tries to create mischief and harm you in any way, we will help you to the best of our ability."

After hearing the speech of the Banu Sheebân General, Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ told him:

"This is very strange. You accept the Truth and yet hesitate. Is it rational to accept what is right and then deny it? It is possible to defend the Faith of Allâh only when you accept all its parts and conditions sincerely and wholeheartedly."

Taking into consideration the vacillation and indecisiveness of Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ rejected his offer of help.

Then he asked him how he would feel if he saw with his own eyes that in a short space of time Allâh Almighty had subjugated the whole of Iran. All its resources – agricultural and financial – would be in the possession and control of the Muslims. Would he not then pray to the Almighty and sing paeans in His Praise?

In astonished tones, No'man bin Shareek, asked if this would definitely happen. He asked:

"Will you really gain this pomp and grandeur? All this eminence! How great you will be at that time!"

On witnessing their reaction, the Prophet ﷺ recited the following Verses:

"O Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ)! Verily, We have sent you as witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner, And as one who invites to Allâh (Islamic Monotheism) by His Leave, and as a lamp spreading light." (33:45,46)

He then rose and hand in hand with Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ set out for his destination. In this last message he had given the glad tidings of worldly success and gain to the Banu Sheebân, in the event of their accepting Islam.

Ibn Atheer says that when a prominent offshoot of the tribe of Banu Sheebân, namely, the Rabee'ah fought a battle with the Iranians and defeated them, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Today the Arabs have taken their revenge on the non-Arabs."

The great General, Mathna ؓ, could not avail of this first opportunity

to accept Islam, but he had certainly received the glad tidings of the Banu Sheebâni coming into the fold of Islam and playing prominent roles in the *Jihâd* for Islam. These prophetic sayings were proved true in the days to follow. He later converted to Islam and became the source of a great increase in the power and might of the Muslims.

According to some historians, Mathna bin Hârithah رض had converted to Islam before the *Hijrah* of the Prophet to Al-Madinah. He had been a member of the first delegation of the Banu Sheebâni whom the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ had met earlier. The Qur'ânic conversation he had with the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ influenced him deeply. His heart had accepted the spiritual message, but he had not publicly acknowledged it due to some expediency.

Abu Bakr Siddiq رض organised eleven different armies to crush the rebel apostates who had reneged on their oath of allegiance to Islam and Allâh Almighty's Prophet and Messenger. They were sent in different directions to suppress the insurrections which, had broken out in the different areas under the sway of Islam.

1. The first army was sent by Abu Bakr Siddiq رض under Khâlid bin Waleed رض to subjugate Taleehah bin Khawaled.
2. 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl was charged with the duty of fighting Musâilmah Kaththâb.
3. Thirdly, he sent Mohajir bin Abu Umayyah رض to San'a', which is in Yemen to oppose Aswad 'Ansi.
4. Khâlid bin Sa'eed bin 'Aas was sent to Syria to suppress the rebellions there.
5. 'Umeir bin Aas was sent to tackle the Banu Qadhâ'ah tribe.
6. Huthaifah bin Mohsin was sent to 'Oman.
7. Arafjah bin Harishmah was ordered to go to Mehrâh people.
8. Abu Bakr Siddiq رض next ordered Suwaid bin Maqrân to fight a war against the people of Tahâmah in Yemen.

9. Tareefah bin Hâdhar رض was sent to battle against Banu Saleem and Banu Hawâzan.
10. Sharjeel bin Hasanah was ordered to aid and assist 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl.
11. 'Ala' bin Hadhrami was sent to Bahrain.

The Banu Sheebân tribe of Mathna bin رض inhabited the land which lay on the borders of Bahrain, Yammama and Iran, so 'Ala' bin Hadhrami established contacts with them in order to overcome the Banu Rabeea'ah tribe of Bahrain, who had turned traitors. The greatest warrior of the Banu Sheebân, Mathna رض, joined forces with the leader of the Muslim army, 'Ala' bin Hazrami and played a pivotal role in destroying the apostates. He proved himself to be an excellent ally and occupied the two famous cities of Bahrain, Qateef and Hâjr. He further helped to annihilate the Iranians and their allies who had also turned against Islam, and advanced to the extreme northern tip of the Gulf to the point where the river Euphrates and the river Dajlah fall into the ocean.

The well-known intellectual of Vabir, Qais bin 'Asim Tamimi records his impressions of Mathna رض thus:

"Mathna bin Hârithah رض was not a Commoner; he was, in fact, a young chieftain of the Banu Sheebân tribe and a famous warrior of Arabia."

Mathna bin Hârithah رض presented himself in the court of the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq رض and asked for permission to fight against the Iranians. Permission was given to him; and he became the first Muslim leader who inspired courage in the Muslims to take on the Iranians. Iran, at that time, was the most feared and powerful state and no nation dared to oppose them. It was this daring act which became the precursor of the triumph over Iraq.

Mathna رض was attacking Iraq again and again in quick succession. He requested the court of the Caliph for assistance so that he could speed up his enterprise. He did not want to give time to the enemy to

recover from the attacks. Abu Bakr Siddiq رض wrote to Khâlid bin Waleed رض who was stationed at Yammama to reach Iraq and join forces with Mathna bin Hârithah رض. He ordered the latter to carry out his military duties under the command of the former. As soon as Khâlid bin Waleed رض reached Iraq, he wrote a letter to the Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi army, Hormuz, which was as follows:

“From Khâlid bin Waleed to Hormuz

“Peace be on him who accepts the Path of Righteousness. Accept Islam; it will be to your advantage. Pay the taxes for yourself and for your peoples and in exchange come under our protection. If you do not accept our demand you will repent it. I have come into your territory with an army of soldiers who love death as much as you love life.”

The Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi army, Hormuz, looked at the letter contemptuously and proceeded arrogantly towards the famous town of Kadhmiah, near Basrah, in Shatal Al-Arab. Leading his Iranian army in all its pomp and glory he stepped out into the battlefield. Khâlid bin Waleed رض had divided his army into three divisions; one of these he placed under the command of Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni رض, and sent them out to fight against the Iranian army. The warriors of Banu Sheebân, under the leadership of Mathna رض, attacked the Iranians so forcefully that they were uprooted and fled the battlefield. The army of Islam won a glorious victory and also gained rich spoils of war. Each *Mujâhid* got weapons and one thousand dirhams. Mathna رض accepted the weapons of war, but did not show any interest in the monetary reward; it held no importance for him, since he was very elated by the fact that Allâh Almighty had blessed the Islamic army with a glorious victory.



After their ignominious defeat in the Battle of Al-salâsal, the Iranian army retreated to the region of Mazâr, and started regrouping on the banks of the river Thani. They wished to rest and refresh themselves before launching another offensive against the army of Islam.

Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ, with his brother, Ma'ni bin Hârithah ﷺ, was on a reconnaissance of the area and happened to come across the Iranian army encamped on the river banks. He realised that they could pose a threat to the armies of Islam any time. Taking into consideration their critical position, they returned post-haste and reported their findings to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. The latter ordered the army, which included these two brothers, to immediately launch an attack on the Iranians, who could not repulse this sudden attack. And thus they faced humiliation and defeat a second time.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ sent a fifth of the spoils of war to Al-Madinah, and stationed himself in the region of Mazâr. This battle is recorded in history as the Battle of Thani, as it was fought on the banks of the river Thani and the general who had displayed his military expertise in that memorable victory was also Mathna ﷺ.



Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ always availed of the martial skills of Mathna ﷺ at critical junctures. On many an occasion he appointed him as his representative to administer and organise the conquered territories, and himself proceeded at the head of the army to other regions.

As the Muslim army advanced into the region of Heerah, the great General, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, was surprised to see that the whole area was completely deserted. He then came to know that the whole nation had taken refuge in the palaces, of which there were many. He selected a few generals from his army and ordered them to besiege the palaces. Dharâr bin Azwar besieged the White Palace and Dharâr bin Khattâb besieged the Arba'a'in Palace. Similarly, the Muslim forces also surrounded all other palaces. Mathna ﷺ encircled the palace of 'Amr bin Baqeealah, and 'Amr bin 'Abdul-Masih was also present there.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ ordered all the Generals to invite the besieged people to the path of Islam. If they accepted, well and good, if not they were to be given time to ponder over the matter. If they still did not accept Islam, they were to be attacked and decimated. When the enemy realised they were in a vice like grip and there was no way out, they agreed to pay a tax of a hundred and ninety thousand dirhams

annually, in return for protection of life and property. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ sent a messenger post-haste to Al-Madinah to get the consent of the Caliph. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ agreed to the terms and advised him to accept the tax and use it to strengthen his companions.

After gaining the consent of the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ signed a treaty with the people of Heera. Worthy of note among these were 'Adi bin 'Adi, 'Amr bin 'Adi, 'Amr bin 'Abdul-Masih and Ayas bin Qbeesah.

All the Generals signed the document and also noted it down that the people of Heerah had unanimously accepted the terms willingly, without any force or duress. Thus, Heerah came under the rule of the Islamic State.

The Roman General, Herculius thought that this would be a golden opportunity to attack the Muslim army since they were already engaged with the Iranians. He ordered his troops to prepare for war. When this news reached the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, in Al-Madinah, he exclaimed passionately:

"I swear by Allâh, through Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, I will set right the minds of these Romans who are going berserk effectively."

Then he sent a message to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to proceed with his army to Yarmook. He also gave him the following advice:

"O Abu Sulaiman, may Allâh bless your sincerity of purpose and good intentions. Spend your energy and strength to gain acceptance from Allâh Almighty, and He will shower you with His Blessings; never ever stray into egoistic narcissism or self-love, for it will harm you enormously. Remember that arrogant people always have to face disgrace and notoriety. Allâh Almighty has been good to us and He will give the best reward. Take half the army with you and let the other half remain there. Entrust them to the command of Mathna ﷺ."

When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ got these orders from the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, he glanced at the men in the army. He selected for his army

all the most respected Companions, and entrusted the other obedient soldiers to the Command of Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ. The latter was extremely upset when he saw this state of affairs. He swore by Allâh Almighty that he did not approve of this division of the army. He said an attempt was being made to deprive him of the blessed services of the most respected Companions, and this was not acceptable to him. He appealed to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to obey the orders of the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and divide the army justly down the ranks of the Companions as well as the other obedient soldiers.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, without questioning the desire of Mathna ؓ, which was based on good intentions, organised the army on the lines desired by him. Seeing that he was satisfied, he spoke these words in bidding farewell to him.

“May Allâh Almighty protect you and Bless you. May He retain your leadership and Bless you with greater strength.”

He sent the weak and worn-out men back to Al-Madinah and commanding his division of the army, he himself set out for Yarmook.

When the Iranian Empire learnt that the Islamic army had been split up into two divisions, he tried to take advantage of the opportunity and ordered that a fierce and powerful army should be readied under his General, Hormuz Jathwiyah, to engage the Muslim forces. He then sent the following threatening letter to Mathna ؓ.

“In order to oppose you I have sent a terrible, fearful and bloodthirsty army, which is composed of herdsmen of pigs and hens. I will wage war against you, using them.”

Mathna bin Hârithah ؓ, in reply, wrote a letter, which is a model of intelligence, wisdom and farsightedness:

“Received your letter and learnt of the situation. I realise from the contents that you are either rebellious or defiant or a liar. This state of affairs is bad for you and good for us. You should be aware that when a ruler speaks lies, he is disgraced and humiliated among his people, and the wrath of Allâh Almighty overtakes him. Our understanding and experience tells us that your death has brought you to oppose us. When a serpent is

about to die it comes out into the open inhabited places. We thank Allâh, the Most Revered for giving you the understanding to bring the herdsman of your sheep, wolves, pigs and hens to war against us. Please bring these ignorant empty-headed men of yours against us. We feel like grieving for your intelligence and wisdom:

“Come let us test our skills,
you can test your arrows we test our courage! (Poetry)

When the Iranian army came out to oppose them, Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni ﷺ, leading the Muslim forces launched such a strong offensive, that they could not establish any stable position in the battlefield. He pursued them, pushing them right up to Madâyan. The Iranians faced a resounding defeat and the Muslim army won a glorious victory. Their General, Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ, sent a letter carrying the good news to Caliph. He also requested that the plea for forgiveness of those among the apostates who had returned to the fold of Islam should be accepted to be sincere and honest. He further asked for permission to induct them into the Muslim army so that their experience and skills could be used to advantage.

He waited for a long time for a reply, but none was forthcoming. Finally he decided to go to Al-Madinah himself to personally speak to the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ. He was very upset to see that he was bedridden, and the shadows of death were lengthening over him. When he saw Mathna ﷺ his eyes lit up. He listened attentively to that entire Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ had to say and agreed with his views. He then sent for 'Umar Farooq ﷺ and instructed him. He said:

“All Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni’s plans are worthy of being put into practice. I do not know if I will even live to see the evening. If I am called to my Maker, send Mathna ﷺ with fresh reinforcements to the battlefield; remember that even the greatest tragedy should not delay this mission. If Syria is conquered, order Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to bring his army to Iraq.”

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ passed away; and even before the early dawn prayers, 'Umar Farooq ﷺ had ordered the army, under the Command

of Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ, to set out to test their strength against the Iranians in the battlefield. As soon as the sun rose, people swore allegiance to 'Umar Farooq ﷺ as the new Caliph. Even three days after he had been accepted as the Caliph, the army was not able to leave. When he saw that people were lacking in confidence and nervous that facing the Iranians, he spoke to them, fervently and eloquently. He fired their emotions of zeal and inspired them with the spirit of *Jihâd*, saying:

"We have broken the power of the Iranians; they have lost heart and are totally demoralised. They do not have the same courage as before. You are the lions of Allâh Almighty and are the heroes of the battlefield, and victory is impatiently waiting for you. Your power and majestic grandeur is making the foe quiver from head to foot. They tremble helplessly in their homes when they think of facing you in the battlefield. Rise and determine to crush their pomp and grandeur and erase it from the history. Get ready to accompany me and annihilate their powerful tyranny!"

'Umar Farooq ﷺ also gave a rousing speech on this occasion. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Mas'ood ﷺ and other *Mujâhideen* rose up, passionately shouting '*Allâho Akbar*', and responding to these sincere exhortations got ready to face the Iranians in the battlefield. Crossing over difficult terrain they finally encamped near Kufa. A few days later both the armies confronted each other in a fierce battle at a place called Namâraq. The Iranian General, Mahân, was captured and the army fled. The *Mujâhideen* gained rich booty in this battle. One-fifth of this was sent to the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq ﷺ for the national treasury and the rest was distributed among the *Mujâhideen*. On this happy occasion the great General Mathna ﷺ, expressed his emotions in Verse, and his imaginative thoughts translated themselves into reality.

The *Mujâhideen* on their fast Arab steeds raced on the right and left banks of the rivers Dajlah and Farâth. One after another important regions such as Namâraq, Saqatiyah, Jasr and Buyab were conquered.



When the Iranians suffered a dishonourable defeat at Namâriq, the Iranian Commander, Rustum, told the cousin of the Iranian Empire, Narshi (the ruler of Kashkar) to take heroic measures to ensure the safety of his lands which were spread far and wide. He said their common enemy was preparing to take over that region as well. The kingdom of Kashkar was fertile and had numerous orchards of a special and expensive variety of date palms.

Kashkar was famous throughout the world because of these orchards. The Commander-in-Chief of the Muslim army Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ told Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ that the Iranian army, after their defeat at the Battle of Namâriq, were retreating towards Kashkar, which was ruled by the cousin of the Iranian Empire, Narshi. They should be pursued without any delay, so that they did not get an opportunity to find refuge there and regroup themselves and prepare to attack the Muslim army. Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ, at the head of the Muslim army caught up with the Iranian army at Wâssat, a famous town in the kingdom of Kashkar. They made a sudden forceful attack that the Iranians were not able to withstand. They were defeated here as well, and fled leaving lots of equipment in the battlefield.

Again the Muslims gained a large booty of the spoils of war – excellent dates and other food. And they gained control over the wealthy treasury of Narshi, who, in order to save his skin fled leaving his kingdom and his treasures behind.

As it was custom one-fifth of the booty was sent by Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ to the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq ﷺ for the *Baithul-Mâl* (national treasury) and the rest was distributed among the *Mujâhideen*. He also wrote the following letter to 'Umar Farooq ﷺ:

"Allâh Almighty has given to us the delicious food which the Iranian Empire used to eat. I am sending some of it to you, so that you personally experience the bounties and blessings of Allâh Almighty."

The engagement at Wâssat came to be remembered as the Battle of Saqâtiyah. The losses suffered by the Muslims at *Jassr* were unparalleled. What happened was? When the Iranians returned after encountering a terrible defeat at Saqâtiyah. Rustum asked them, who

would be the strongest person to challenge the Arabs in the battlefield.

“Everyone answered simultaneously that Bahman Jathwiyah would be the best man. He was also known as the Leader with the Eyebrows.”

This was because he was very proud of his physical strength and he arrogantly and haughtily turned his eyebrows upwards from his eyes, so that anyone who saw his fierce looks would be terrified from the very outset. The Iranian General, Rustum, sent the Iranian army under the Bahman Jathwiyah to fight against the Muslims at Madâ'n. He gave him dangerous elephants so that he could battle fiercely, and he handed him the Iranian flag – a symbol of national love – so that they would be moved to fight valiantly to protect its honour.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Muslim army in this battle was Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood ﷺ, and with him were fearless and experienced generals and heroes such as Mathna bin Hâarithah Sheebâni ﷺ. The Muslim army encamped on the shores of the river Euphrates. The Iranian General, Bahman Jathyiah descended on the other side of the river and sent the following message to the Commander-in-Chief of the Muslim army, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Mas'ood ﷺ.

“We invite you to cross the river Euphrates and face us or invite us to cross over and oppose you. Lets us know which option you prefer.”

The entire Muslim army voiced their unanimous opinion that they should not cross the river, as they would then have to face irreparable damage. Saleet bin Qais and some of the other *Mujâhideen* told Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood ﷺ that when attacking the enemy a general should always remember to have a secure route by which he could retreat just in case of necessity. They added that the Iranians were a very tough people and extra precautionary measures were necessary when facing them; if they crossed the river it would not be advantageous for them.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Muslim army, Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood ﷺ, displaying pride and religious fervour decided to cross the river Euphrates; he said they were not afraid of death and the waters of the Euphrates were their friends and he expressed surprise

at the cowardice of Saleet bin Qais.

Saleet replied that he was not a coward, neither was he avoiding *Jihâd*; he was merely offering his advice based on his experience in battle, so that the Muslim army did not have to face any problems. Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood ﷺ commanded the army to cross the river Euphrates.

The first one to obey the command and descend into the waters of the river Euphrates was Saleet bin Qais. Dr. Haikal, writes in his book:

“Umar Farooq ﷺ, that in this particular battle the Muslim army numbered a little less than ten thousand. Yet, in spite of this they faced problems in the battlefield. This was because the enemy forces were positioned on the very edge of the riverbank. The Muslim army had absolutely no space to fall into rank formations and attack the enemy. The Iranian General was wearing bracelets with bells to advance with his army. Hearing the jangling of the bracelets, the Arabian steeds of the Muslim army were disturbed and retreated in a mad stampede. Thus the Muslim forces incurred heavy irreparable losses.”

The *Mujâhideen* got down from their horses and a hand to hand combat ensued. The Iranian army's elephants started trampling on the *Mujâhideen* who were on foot. The Commander-in-Chief, Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood ﷺ, commanded the *Mujâhideen* to cut off the ropes of the elephants and turn the how dahs upside down, and topple down their riders. This was now their only hope of success. The *Mujâhideen* tried to do their best as commanded; Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood ﷺ himself advanced and attacked the tusk of a white elephant with his sword. But the elephant, in a fit of rage, turned and attacked him. As a result he fell down and his soul soared to heaven as the elephant trampled him down. The *Mujâhideen* were disturbed on seeing this, but instead of retreating they advanced forward. Attacking the elephant, in one gigantic effort they killed it. The elephant fell like a huge mountain, kissing the earth. One of the young *Mujâhideen* stepped forward to take the standard from the grasp of the fallen commander and moved forward between the ranks, waving it. But he was soon martyred. Thus the flag was passed from one *Mujâhid* to another, as seven of them were martyred, one after another. Then Mathna ﷺ, a picture of grief and regret for the irreparable losses suffered by the army of

Islam, moved forward and took up the flag. Planning to save the rest of the survivors and working on a strategy for an honourable retreat, he commanded the army to cross the river by way of the bridge. Wisdom necessitated this move to prevent further loss of life.

The mark of a successful General is that he always advises his men to use different tactics and adopt varying moves in accordance with the needs of the changing conditions in the battlefield. If it is profitable to move forward, he orders his men to advance; if it is advantageous to withdraw and disengage, he commands them to retreat, without feeling chagrined or embarrassed.

The bridge on the river Euphrates had been damaged; however Mathna bin Hârithah رض succeeded in taking the surviving *Mujâhideen* back to safety after repairing the bridge. He was injured, but did not retreat until the last man had crossed the bridge to safety.

After reaching a safe spot, he sent 'Arwah bin Zaid to Al-Madinah to inform the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq رض about the defeat suffered by the Muslim forces. The whole of Al-Madinah was shaken by the news of the defeat and Ma'âdh bin Jabl رض was moved to tears. 'Umar Farooq رض consoled the people asking them not to panic, as such things were very important part of war. Where there are expectations of victory one should fortify oneself to bear up with the news of a tragic defeat.

In Arabic word 'Jassr' means a bridge across a river or a stream. Since the bridge on the river Euphrates was important in saving the lives of the defeated survivors, this encounter came to be known as the Battle of *Jassr*. The wrong strategy adopted by the Commander-in-Chief, Abu 'Ubaid bin Mas'ood رض had resulted in a heavy loss of both men and arms.

The practical and wise move would have been to ask the enemy to cross over the bridge, thus the Muslim army would have been at an advantage. They could have beheaded the Iranian army as they crossed the river. But because of the tough and hard-headed stance adopted by the Commander-in-Chief this great opportunity was lost, and the consequent tragic repercussions had to be borne by all the army.



The stream which is a tributary of the river Euphrates, Boyab, lends its name to the battle fought on its shores. This battle is also known as the 'Youn Al-Âshâr (Day of ten). This is because on the day of this battle each *Mujâhid* killed ten Iranians and the Arabic word for ten is *Âashrah*. This battle was fought in 13th Hijrah. It is also known as the Battle of Mahran, since the name of the Iranian General was Mehran Hamdâni. Most of the *Mujâhideen* had left for Al-Madinah after the terrible defeat at the Battle of *Jassr*. Mathna bin Hârithah and a few of the other continued to live on in the same city. Mathna invited the people to take part in *Jihâd*; he, at the same time requested the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq to send reinforcements. The Caliph himself was troubled by what had happened at the Battle of *Jassr* and so it took a little while to send military assistance. But reinforcements did arrive. Some of the tribal people met the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq, and expressed their desire to join the Muslim army engaged in the *Jihâd* on another front, in Syria. But the Caliph encouraged them to join the Muslim *Mujâhideen* in Iraq. When they agreed, he ordered them to partake in the *Jihâd* under the command of Mathna bin Hârithah. When the Iranian Generals Rustum and Ferozân learnt that fresh armed forces had already arrived in Iraq from Al-Madinah, they got ready a powerful army and sent it to fight the Muslims under the command of Mehran Hamdâni. The two armies confronted each other on the banks of the Boyab Stream.

The Iranians divided their army into three divisions each of which had elephants. Mathna addressed the *Mujâhideen* and said that he would shout out 'Allâho Akbar' thrice. They should get ready for the battle echoing his cry. When he called out 'Allâho Akbar' the fourth time, they should all together assault the enemy. Mathna had hardly given the battle-cry once when the Iranians launched their first attack. Intense fighting broke out. Mathna bin Hârithah shouted out encouragement to the *Mujâhideen*.

"O *Mujâhideen* advance! We should not be disgraced on this day. We have a golden opportunity today to avenge the defeat of the Battle of *Jassr*. Do not worry about your lives and make a deadly attack on the enemy. The eyes of the people of Al-Madinah are on you. I am fully confident that heroes such as

you will stand firm and steadfast in the battle!"

After this the *Mujâhideen* performed astounding feats in the battlefield against the Iranians, who suffered an ignominious defeat; thus the Battle of *Jassr* was avenged. And this great victory at Boyab delighted the people of Al-Madinah.

After the Battle of Boyab, the wound suffered by Mathna رض at *Jassr* started to fester and deepen and he succumbed to it. Finally, he went on to meet his Creator عز و جل, Allâh Almighty. May He make the grave of Mathna رض one of the gardens of Paradise!

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Nu'mân bin Maqrân

“Nu'mân bin Maqrân  is a great contemporary of the Prophet , who because of his statesmanlike and wise invitation, influenced his whole tribe to enter the fold of Islam.” (*Historians*)

Nu'mân bin Maqrân



Mazeenah is that lucky tribe of the Arabian peninsula, who are held up as an example of firm faith and strong belief. The tribe lived near Al-Madinah on the road which, linked up with Makkah. After the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ, many tribes turned apostate of Islam. They very bluntly refused to pay *Zakât*, but it is an honour to the tribe of Mazeenah that they remained as firm as a mountain in their faith and belief in the tenets which are the five pillars of Islam. They continued to pay *Zakât*, observed the obligatory prayers five times a day and adhered faithfully to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. They neither panicked nor faltered in their steadfastness; doubt and disbelief did not enter their hearts even for a moment. In fact they effected even the manner of their conversion to Islam in a right royal manner.

Once Nu'mân bin Maqrân رضي الله عنه was sitting with his nine brothers when about four hundred heroes and warriors of the tribe approached them. They said, Brothers of our tribe, this is a moment of careful consideration for us. In our neighbouring city, Al-Madinah there is a new movement – the religion of Islam, which has taken birth and spreading its influence rapidly in all directions. No doubt the invitation of the founder of this revolutionary new religion carries with it the message of kindness, embracing love, respect for all, fairness, justice and goodness. This proposal carries with it the secret formula of success, both for this world and for the Hereafter. The other tribes are swiftly entering the fold of Islam and thus gaining honour; we are, however, still deprived of this great blessing. Their Chief, Nu'mân bin Maqrân رضي الله عنه, was lost in deep thought in the midst of this conversation; obviously this silence was a sign of and a precursor to an expression of a premeditated resolve. After an interval he came out of his reverie and said:

"Brothers, I have made a firm decision to set out for Al-Madinah early in the morning and those of you who wish to accompany me on this auspicious journey is welcome to join me."

At dawn, Nu'mân bin Maqrân was pleasantly amazed to find all his nine brothers and the four hundred warriors ready to embark on the journey with him. There had been no rains and a famine in the region, and the means of income had dwindled and were very limited, yet in spite of all these problems, the chieftain, Nu'mân bin Maqrân collected many very expensive gifts to express his sincere love and regard for the Prophet ﷺ.

When this caravan, under the leadership of their chieftain, reached Al-Madinah they caused a very unusual stir in the city. The streets of the city seemed to be bustling with activity, and the Prophet ﷺ who had already learnt of their arrival, came out to greet them.

The chieftain, Nu'mân bin Maqrân and his nine brothers, Sanân, Suwaid, 'Abdullâh, 'Abdur-Rahmân, 'Aqeel, Ma'qal, Na'eem, Mardhi, Dharrâr and the four hundred warriors swore allegiance to Islam simultaneously. This was a breathtaking sight, worthy of being seen and experienced. Every eye was filled with tears, and the face of the Prophet ﷺ was radiant with joy. The faces of the Companions were glowing with happiness. Almighty Allâh so loved this sight that a Âyah (Verse) was revealed, and the moment was immortalised in the Qur'ân for all time.

"And of the bedouins there are some who believe in Allâh and the Last Day, and look upon what they spend in Allâh's Cause as means of nearness to Allâh, and a cause of receiving the Messenger's invocations. Indeed these (spendings in Allâh's Cause) are a means of nearness for them. Allâh will admit them to His Mercy. Certainly Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (9:99)

Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ, after entering the fold of Islam, took a very active part in each Jihâd fought for the spread of Islam. He took part in the battle of Trenches; in the conquest of Makkah, his entry as the Commander of his tribal army with the flag held aloft in his hand was

grand and impressive. There were one thousand three hundred warriors from his tribe, Mazeenah, among the ten thousand Muslim *Mujâhidîn*. Nu'mân bin Maqrân had sworn to be loyal to the Prophet ﷺ at times of hardship and ease. And he stood by his word. In the troubled times following the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ when the fledgling Muslim state was in danger of extinction, he stood like a huge mountain, unshakeable and steadfast.

Historians and commentators write that Nu'mân bin Maqrân was a great personality, a contemporary of the Prophet ﷺ, who played a pivotal role in converting to Islam his whole tribe. His statesmanlike conduct, his wise leadership came to the forefront in a clear and vivid manner during the battles fought against the apostates.

After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, this was an extremely tempestuous and critical time in the history of Islam. There were rebellions and uprisings. Asserting their independence, Banu Ghatfân, the Banu Asad and the Banu Thay came out on the battlefields. The Banu Thâ'lbah bin Sa'd, Banu Marrah and Banu 'Abas also gathered in the open area, Abraq, near Al-Madinah. These people had gathered in such huge numbers in order to put pressure on the new Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq that gain some advantages by revising some of the basic tenets and conditions of Islam. If they failed to do so, they planned to turn apostate give up Islam and attack Al-Madinah. These tribes united and by common consent formed a delegation. This panel of representatives would meet with the new Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq and request him to free them from the obligation of paying *Zakât*, if this was not done, their tribes would turn against Islam itself. When the delegation presented their demands to Abu Bakr Siddiq, he was infuriated, and gave a very firm and unequivocal answer.

"I swear by Allâh, if these people refuse to give me so much as piece of rope which they used to pay during the time of the Prophet ﷺ, I will wage war against them."

The delegation returned speechless to their leaders and told them what Abu Bakr Siddiq said. On hearing this reply the chieftains were enraged and thought the followers of Islam present in Al-Madinah would not be able to oppose them. Thus, this would be an opportune time to assault that city, and they decided that there should

be no delay in implementing this decision. They thought the results of this action would be in their favour. And since they would be in complete control after their successful conquest of Al-Madinah, they could run the administration as they pleased. As soon as they heard of the decision, all the chieftains became greedy for what was yet to fall into their laps! They started dreaming of the power of government and the might that would soon be theirs!

Abu Bakr Siddiq رض put into operation precautionary measures; he posted strict vigilance posses on all the roads leading into Al-Madinah, to cope with all possible dangerous incursions. He had realised from the reactions of the members of the delegation that his very firm uncompromising reply would invoke some reaction, possibly an attack on Al-Madinah itself. The reading of the situation by Abu Bakr Siddiq رض turned out to be correct; as soon as the sun set, the apostates attacked. But on every road experienced, fearless and brave warriors had been deployed. The Muslims, defending their beloved city, defeated the attackers. Turning around, they fled. The *Mujâhideen*, who were on camel back pursued them for a long distance. When the apostates realised that their lives were at stake, they started beating their drums violently before the camels. The camels reared up so badly that it became difficult to control them; they turned round and raced to Al-Madinah, stopping only when they reached their home ground. But, by the Grace of Allâh Almighty, none of the *Mujâhideen* suffered loss of life or property. The apostates, however, became encouraged and more confident since the *Mujâhideen*, on their camels had turned round and gone back to Al-Madinah. They planned another attack, but the Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq رض was well aware of what he was up against.

At night he organised a troop of *Mujâhideen* and decided he would lead them himself. On the right of this army would be Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض, and on the left would be his brother 'Abdullâh bin Maqrân رض. At the back of these troops, Suwaid bin Maqrân رض would be positioned as for purposes of safety. They set out in the latter part of the night and assaulted the enemy led by Abu Bakr Siddiq رض in the early hours of dawn. The attack was so sudden and powerful that the enemy could not withstand it. As the sun rose up in the heavens they

were defeated and fled from the scene. Their leader, Habbâl bin Khawaled Asdi was killed. This battle was fought at Dhi-Al-Qassah. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ handed over the organization and administration of the area to the famous and respected chieftain of the Banu Mazeenah, Nu'mân bin Maqrân ؓ. He then returned to Al-Madinah.

Soon after this the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, led his army on an expedition to crush the apostasy in the tribes of Banu 'Abas, Banu Bakr, and Banu Dheebân. He entered the area of strategic importance, Rabathah. Nu'mân bin Maqrân ؓ took part in this expedition as the right wing Commander of the Muslim army. The enemy again faced a clear and manifest defeat, and the Muslim forces returned triumphant to Al-Madinah.

Caliph 'Umar Farooq ؓ had sent Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ؓ to the tribe of Banu Hawazen to collect Zakât and Mathna bin Hârithah Sheebâni ؓ had been grievously injured. At this time news reached the Caliph 'Umar Farooq ؓ, that the Iranian army was being mobilised in a place called Qâdissiyah. This was a worrisome piece of news for Caliph 'Umar ؓ. After giving a great deal of thought and consideration to the matter, he decided to lead the Muslim army himself to oppose the Iranians. He organised the troops, and leaving 'Ali ؑ as his representative in Al-Madinah, set out for Qâdssiah. When 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ؓ came to hear of this, he followed Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and caught up with him. He then suggested that since this was an extremely critical period, it was essential that he, the Caliph should stay on in Al-Madinah, give the command of the army to someone else and return to the capital. 'Umar ؓ asked him who would be the best person under the prevailing circumstances. After giving the matter due consideration, 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ؓ suggested that Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ؓ would be the most appropriate person for the position. All the members of the council of advisers approved of this idea and said:

"It is essential that you stay in Al-Madinah, and Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ؓ would be the most appropriate person to command the Muslim forces."

Caliph 'Umar ﷺ sent a message to Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ asking him to take command of the Muslim army, and ordered him to take full advantage of the experienced *Mujâhideen* such as Mathna bin Hârithah ﷺ, Mughairah bin Sha'bâh ﷺ and Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ.

“Faith and trust in Allâh Almighty should be your strongest defence; before you enter the battlefield you should send a delegation of dignified and imposing persons to the Iranian Empire. Those people who saw them for the first time should be over-awed by their very presence; they should be fearless, eloquent, and learned.”

Following the orders of Caliph, Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ, formed a delegation consisting of Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ, 'Aasim bin 'Amr ﷺ, 'Amr bin Ma'd Yakrab, Bashr bin Abu Rahm and Hanthalah bin Abu Rabi' Tameemi رضي الله عنه. Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ was the leader of this delegation.

This delegation reached Madyan to see the Iranian Empire, Yazdajar, and asked for permission to meet with him. The Empire sat in his grand court on his throne in all his splendour and glory and asked that they be presented. Without paying any attention to all the pomp and grandeur, the members of the delegation walked straight up to Empire Yazdajar, seated on the royal throne. The Empire haughtily asked his interpreter to ask these people what they wanted from him. Then displaying the utmost pride and arrogance, he said:

“Tell these people that they are taking advantage of our decency. Do they not know how far is our reach and our power?”

The assembled court quivered in the dead silence that followed the expression of the Empire's wrath in thunderous tones. The legs of the ministers and courtiers standing subserviently with folded arms trembled in abject fear. The Empire's face had turned purple with rage and sparks seemed to fly from his eyes that had become like red-hot embers. Each member of the Muslim delegation stood calmly, watching the hysterical outburst of the Empire of Iran. When he had finished giving vent to his immature and childish tantrum, the head of the delegation, Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ, spoke to him after first reciting Verses in praise of Allâh Almighty and the Prophet ﷺ, he said:

"O King of Iran listen carefully to what we have to say. Allâh Almighty has been very Beneficent and Kind to us. He sent his Messenger to guide us; the Prophet ﷺ urged us to do good and avoid all kinds of evil. He also gave us the glad tidings that if we accept his invitation we will prosper both in this world and in the next. We accepted his invitation and within a few days our lives altered radically for the better. Our hand-to-mouth existence changed to a life of plenty; our shameful life was transformed into a life of respect and honour, and all our petty jealousies, and rivalries were forgotten in feelings charged with fraternal love. Our Prophet ﷺ commanded us to teach people to be well wishes and to start this with those closest to us - our neighbours. This is why we are inviting you to enter the fold of Islam. The Islamic way of life lifts up its followers from the bottomless depths of *kufîr* and association of other deities with the One True Allâh, to the most exalted and radiant light of True Faith. If you accept this way of life we can leave with you the Book of Allâh Almighty, the Noble Qur'ân, and you can impose its laws on your people. We will not interfere in any matter of yours, we are not greedy for the material things of this world. If, however, you reject our invitation, then you have to be prepared to pay the *Jazia*, imposed by us on non-Muslims. If you are not prepared to do even this, then understand that the matter of who will rule over this land will have to be settled in the battlefield."

The Iranian Empire was infuriated by the speech of Nu'mân bin Maqrân and jumping up he said:

"There is no greater ignoramus than you on the surface of the earth; you do not even know in whose court you are chattering such drivel. We will entrust your matter to chiefs on our borders, and they will see to it. Do not advance even one inch into our territory. We are very capable of destroying you."

Then calming down a little, he said:

"Yes, an idea has struck me. If some need or necessity has brought you to us, then we can give you enough grains to

provide your homes with food. Not only this, we will also present to your chieftains expensive and grand clothes. We will also appoint a ruler who will always treat you well. Tell me, what you would like to have?"

One of the members of the delegation bravely said:

"We do not care two hoots for your offerings of grains or expensive and grand clothes. You are drunk with the power of your monarchy, and you cannot see the throne wobbling insecurely under you. These courtly followers and sycophants and this worldly wealth and its luxuries will not be of any use in the long run. Our spiritual power will become a whip and a scourge for every Iranian. When we enter the battlefield we leap on our prey like lions and you are our favourite prey."

He gave the Empire of Iran such a dressing down that he became even more enraged. Seething with fury, he said:

"If there had not been an international law regarding the security and safety of diplomats, I would have ordered you to be beheaded. Get out of my sight, I do not have anything for you. And listen! Go and tell your Commander-in-Chief that I am sending my General Rustum now towards you, he will bury you in the battlefield of Qâdissiyah."

Then, with the intention of disgracing and humiliating the delegation before the whole court, he sent for a basket full of soil and ordered his men to place it on the head of the member who was considered to be the most respected and trustworthy among the delegates. And he ordered that the delegation should be chased out of Mada'n in public. The courtiers asked the delegation, who was the most honourable person among the delegation. Realising that this was no simple or innocent question, 'Asim bin 'Amr رض stepped forward and said I am the most respected person. The ministers of the government then placed the soil-filled basket on his head and asked them to return from whence they had come.

They came out of the capital, Madyan, and got on to their camels with the basket of soil. On reaching the presence of Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs رض, they gave him the good news of victory and said:

"Allâh Almighty will conquer for the Muslims the land of Persia. And they will be masters of Iran."

A few days later the Battle of Qâdissiyah was fought and the trenches of the battlefield of Qâdissiyah were filled with dead bodies. But all these bodies were those of the Iranian soldiers.

Though the Iranians faced a humiliating defeat at Qâdissiyah, they did not lose courage; on the other hand they conscripted new recruits and organised an army numbering one hundred and fifty thousand soldiers. When the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq رض, heard of this huge army, he himself got ready to face this great danger to the Muslim *Ummah*. But some important personages of the *Ummah* prevented him from doing so. They suggested that a commander should be given the responsibility of leading the army on this expedition, and it would be better if he continued to remain in the capital, Al-Madinah.

'Umar Farooq رض asked them to suggest the name of one particular person who would best be able to fulfil the responsibility of leading the Muslim army.

They all replied in chorus that he himself knew the army very well. After considering the matter for a few minutes he said:

"I swear by Allâh Almighty that I will appoint such a person to lead the Muslim *Mujâhidîn* who at the time of action in the battlefield will appear swifter than an arrow; such a person is Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض."

As soon as they heard this they all exclaimed that in truth he was the ideal person for the position of commander. After gaining the vote of confidence of the members of the Advisory Council and the body of Ministers of Administration and Management, 'Umar Farooq رض wrote the following letter to Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض.

"To Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض from 'Umar bin Khattâb (رض).

Assalamu 'Alikum wa Rahimathullah, my best wishes to you.

I have received news that the Iranians have gathered a huge

armed force in the city of Nahâwind. After you receive my letter, please set out to oppose this Iranian army with the Name of Allâh Almighty on your lips and with trust in His Assistance. Please remember that a single Muslim is more precious to me than a hundred thousand dinars. With *Salam*."

Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض prepared his army for combat and sent experience warriors to get information about the prevailing situation. As these riders approached the city of Nahâwind, their steeds suddenly stopped. The ace riders tried to spur them on but instead of moving forwards they started to rear up. When the riders got off to check on the problem they were surprised to find that nails had pierced their hooves. They immediately informed their Commander, Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض of the situation and asked for his opinion or advice on what to do next.

He asked them to stay put as they were and when the darkness of night fell they should light huge bonfires to enable the enemy to spot them in the bright light produced by them. When the light of the fire spread far and wide, they should pretend to be scared and terrified and swiftly race backwards. The enemy should feel that they were terrified and were retreating. Then the enemy would experience an intense desire to capture them; in order to accomplish this they would chase them and themselves get pierced by the nails and thorns they had spread out for the *Mujâhideen*. Thus when these nails and thorns got embedded in the hooves of their steeds, the way would be cleared for the Muslim soldiers. This ploy worked against the Iranians and when in the glow of the fire they saw that the Muslim soldiers wanted to retreat, they sent their workers to clear the roads. When the roads were cleared the *Mujâhideen* suddenly turned around and advanced towards Nahâwind and attacked the enemy.

Nu'mân bin Maqrân رض, leading his men, reached the northern borders of Nahâwind and addressing *Mujâhideen*, said:

"I will raise my voice in praising Allâh Almighty and say '*Allâho Akbar*'. When I raise my voice the first time, you should all become alert, when I call out the second time get your weapons ready. And when I raise my voice the third time, all of you should attack the enemy with me."

So, Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ repeated the phrase three times and exhibiting great daring and courage, rushed into the ranks of the enemy. And under his leadership the *Mujâhideen*, swept the enemy like pieces of straw on a forceful current and moved forward rapidly and relentlessly. A forceful battle ensued, such as has been rarely paralleled in history. The Iranian soldiers were mowed down like a sheaves of grain, and one could only see heaps of bodies lying all over the battlefield. The blood of the sinners was flowing like water and the battlefield had become like a swamp. The horse of the Commander-in-Chief, Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ, had become uncontrollable and slipped in the slimy mud. As soon as Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ fell from his horse he was martyred. His brother stepped forward, picked up the standard, and threw his sheet over his brother's body, so that the rest of the men did not realise their Commander-in-Chief had been martyred.

When finally the *Mujâhideen* had completely vanquished the enemy and their faces shone with the radiance of a clear and resounding success, they started looking around for their Commander-in-Chief, Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ. Not finding him anywhere, they started asking of each other where he was; then his brother lifted up the sheet and told them:

"Look, this is your General in the eternal sleep of death; having achieved martyrdom he has entered his name in letters of gold among the people in Paradise."

The eyes of all the loyal *Mujâhideen* were filled with tears at the sight.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)



Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi

On one occasion, the Prophet ﷺ, asked Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi رضي الله عنهما, "What preparations have you made for *Jihâd*?" He answered on hearing this:

"I have love and obedience for the Prophet ﷺ and a swift and daring horse. This is what I have made ready."

Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ

Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ was a great General of the Muslim army. He was a picture of disciplined obedience, a well built, handsome and attractive great hero of the Muslim *Ummah* who was extremely dignified. A brave, and daring soldier, an ace rider - *Mujâhid*. Who was faster than wind, and an exemplary champion and supporter of Islam. He put to good use his experience as a warrior and could be depended upon at the most of crucial times. He did not get many opportunities to display his incomparable qualities of valour and military skills during the time of the Prophet ﷺ, because he joined the circle of the followers of Islam late. Nonetheless, in Qâdissiyah, Nahâwind and in each of the battles against the apostates, he left lasting impressions of martial expertise and skill which are inscribed in history in golden letters. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ knew very well his incomparable courage, his lightening speed, his foresight and expertise in assaulting the enemy and paid him the compliment quoted above.

After the Battle of Tabook, in the year 9th Hijrah many tribes entered the fold of Islam. In order to receive in person blessings from the benefactor of Mankind, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, many crowds came to delight in his company and see him with their own eyes.

The Prophet ﷺ sent his loyal Companion, Basheer bin Sufyân ﷺ, to collect the *Zakât* dues from the Banu Tameem tribe, but they refused to pay. He was very upset and returned to Al-Madinah empty-handed. When the Prophet ﷺ heard about this disobedience he was

very angry and addressing another trusted Companion, Prophet ﷺ asked:

“Who will go to accomplish this mission?”

‘Ainiah bin Badr said:

“O Prophet ﷺ may my mother and my father be sacrificed for you, please give me a chance to serve you. I would love to volunteer myself.”

The benefactor of Mankind, the Prophet ﷺ appointed him an officer and placed fifty *Mujâhideen* under him. He attacked the Banu Tameem, defeated them and captured eleven men and women and brought them back to Al-Madinah. Among the prisoners was the Chieftain, ‘Atârad. When these prisoners were brought in, the Prophet ﷺ happened to be in a private room next to his mosque. Bilal ﷺ had given the *Adhâan* for the *Dhuhr* prayer and the Prophet ﷺ was a little late in coming out to lead the prayers. The prisoners who were in chains outside the Prophet’s mosque became restless. One blunt outspoken prisoner, Iqrâa bin Habis, called out loudly from outside the room of the Prophet ﷺ:

“Mister, release me from this imprisonment! You should be aware of the fact that I am a famous poet of my tribe. When I write verses praising anyone, the whole world looks at him with envy. And when I decide to become critical of any person, then I sow such seeds of hatred and scorn that the man is not even able to lift up his head and walk upright among his peers. It is better for you O Prophet ﷺ that you release a man like me who does not care for the world or its material pleasures and attractions. Or else the outcome of your actions will not be good.”

The benefactor of Mankind, the Prophet ﷺ replied in gentle tones:

“You are speaking lie. Respect or disrespect in the eyes of the world is in the total control of Allâh ﷺ.”

After answering to the man’s insolent and rude challenge calmly and softly, he walked into the mosque and led the prayers with full concentration and devotion. Having offered his prayers to his Creature, the Prophet ﷺ turned his attention towards the prisoners.

"All right, now tell me."

He said:

"What you wished to say."

Their noted orator, 'Atârad bin Hâjeb, displaying his skills spoke eloquently and influenced his listeners. When he had finished, the Prophet ﷺ ordered Qais bin Thâbit ﷺ to give him a befitting reply. His speech was so articulate and expressive that he cast a spell on the audience who was swaying to the rhythm and cadence of his oratory. Then the most famous among the poets of Banu Tameem, Zabarqân bin Bader was brought forward. As soon as he rose he started to recite his poetry extempore. When he had finished presenting his latest verses before the congregation, the Prophet ﷺ asked Hassân bin Thâbit ﷺ to display his mastery over versification. He started to recite verses in reply so passionately and extemporaneously that the spectators sat speechless and spellbound.

Seeing this the chieftains of the Banu Tameem acknowledged without hesitation:

"The Muslim orators are without doubt superior to ours, both in eloquence and articulation. Your poets too are far better than those of the Banu Tameem in mastery over language and extempore composition. We acknowledge that you are a True Prophet, and that the Qur'ân is the True Word of Allâh. Your Companions are skilled and expert, and it is because of the blessing of having your companionship and training that simple rustics and shepherds have become sophisticated orators and poets, administrators and rulers with power and authority. O Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), we accept you sincerely and wholeheartedly. Please give us the opportunity to enter the safe haven of Islam. This is our good fortune that today we have been in your blessed presence and seen your radiant face."

The Prophet ﷺ then taught them how to swear allegiance to Islam; and all those chieftains swore fealty to Islam and Allâh ﷺ, thus elevating them. Among them was Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameem, whose heart was enlightened by the brilliant rays of Islam. Allâh ﷺ had not liked the crude manner in which the prisoners of the Banu Tameem

had used the vulgar language of the marketplace to call out to the Prophet ﷺ while he was in his private room. So the following Verses of Sûrah Al-Hujurât were revealed:

“Verily, those who call you from behind the dwellings, most of them have no sense. And if they had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been better for them. And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (49:4,5)

The people of the Banu Tameem were shaken by this revelation and started to plead for forgiveness for their sins. The every act of accepting Islam and entering its hallowed circle is so loved by Allâh ﷺ, that all those sins committed during the days of ignorance and darkness are automatically forgiven and erased. The Banu Tameem, exhibited great civility after accepting Islam. They put all they had at stake - their wealth, their intelligence, and their lives - for the promotion and advancement of their new faith. They fulfilled their obligations of love and loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ. When they heard of his passing away from this world, they were heart-broken and lamenting, they exclaimed:

“We will always regret the fact that we did not serve him as we should have. Alas, the time for service was passed in acts of hostility; the darkness of ignorance clouded our vision. If only more time had been granted to us to achieve our desire to serve him and his cause. But thanks to Allâh ﷺ, that at least now we are out of the darkness of ignorance; it is consolation that at least during his lifetime we had the good fortune to accept Islam, and our life is now made purer by its pervasive goodness.”

After this, two of the young men of the Banu Tameem, Qa’qâ’ bin ‘Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ and his brother, ‘Âsim bin ‘Amr became invaluable and outstanding *Mujâhid*. All minds were obsessed with the desire to do their utmost for the triumphant spread of Islam even at the cost of their lives. They used to attack the enemy with such lightening speed that he used to be taken totally by surprise and could not face them.



Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ joined the Muslim army as an ordinary soldier but because of his courage, valour, foresight and skill in strategy he was soon promoted to the position of General. During this period most of the *Mujâhideen* realised that, that section of the army which had Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ in it was never defeated. On the other hand it always returned triumphant, This was the reason for the tribute paid by the Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ quoted above.

Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ was not only a brave soldier, he had also attained spiritual eminence with his absolute faith and adherence to the principles of Islam. When there was the rebellious movement of apostates among his tribe of Banu Tameem after the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ, he opposed them without caring for the ancient tradition of loyalty to the tribe first and foremost. On the grounds of support and loyalty to Islam, he fought swiftly and courageously battles against the movement of apostasy, destroying them. He was by nature indifferent to the accumulation of wealth, materialistic temptations or the lust for sovereign power over any territory or region. During his time the Islamic army won numerous victories and untold treasures came into the national treasury as booty of war. He could very well have amassed immense wealth. However, indifference to worldly considerations was a predominant feature of his character, and he never tainted himself with 'filthy lucre.'

'Alqamah bin 'Alathah Kalbi, a respected and famous member of the Banu Kalb tribe became a Muslim and then turned apostate during the life of the Prophet ﷺ and fled to Syria. Then when he heard of the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ, he returned to his tribe and started indoctrinating his people against Islam. Having strayed himself, he now tried to lead others too to perdition. When Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ came to hear that he was responsible for spreading propaganda against Islam, he ordered the courageous and young warrior, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ, to either capture him alive or kill him. When Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ got this order from the Caliph, he set out on the mission at the head of an army.

When 'Alqamah bin 'Alathah Kalbi learnt of the arrival of Muslim army he fled on his horse, taking advantage of the darkness of night. When the Muslim caught his wife and sons and questioned them, they admitted unhesitatingly that they were themselves Muslims, and they had absolutely nothing to do with his apostasy. Immediately the Muslims stopped questioning them and did not trouble them any further. When Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ reached Al-Madinah in search of 'Alqamah, he came to know that he had already reached in the presence of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and pledged his return to Islam. And the Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ had trusted his repentance to be sincere and given him safe haven. In Islam all crimes are wiped out when one sincerely repents. Thus 'Alqamah bin 'Alâthah Kalbi once again joined the caravan of Islam and started living life according to its tenets. Thus, a repentant sinner is forgiven and accepted into the fold of Islam when he finds his way back to the Truth.

On one occasion, the benefactor of Mankind, the Prophet ﷺ, asked Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ, "What preparations have you made for *Jihâd*?"

He answered on hearing this:

"I have love and obedience for the Prophet ﷺ and a swift and daring horse. This is what I have made ready."

This is very good preparation. What more could you possibly need to enter the battlefield of *Jihâd*? Doubtless for a sincere *Mujâhid* these are the best arms. If any *Mujâhid* is armed with these weapons and turns in the direction of the battlefield of *Jihâd*, success and triumph eagerly await him. Without doubt love for his Prophet and obedience to him, the riches of Faith and Trust in Allâh ﷺ and a swift steed are invaluable and ample treasures for a hero of *Jihâd*.

During the Caliphate of Abu Bakr ؓ, in the 12th year of Hijrah, soon after General Khâlid bin Waleed ؓ give a crushing defeat to Musâilmah Kaththâb and his men in Yamâmah. After that Khâlid bin

Waleed got orders from the Caliph to march towards the borders of Syria and Iraq with his army to join up with 'Ayadh bin Ghanam who would be there with his army. They both were commanded to advance towards Syria; but the fearful Iranian General, Hormuz, who was already fully armed and waiting at Ablah, came forward to oppose them. In view of the situation, Khâlid bin Waleed sent an emissary to the Caliph's court and asked for reinforcements. Then Abu Bakr Siddiq sent an army under the leadership of Qa'qâ', saying that an army which had such heroic and fearless *Mujâhideen* like him who did not mind risking their lives, could never be defeated. When Qa'qâ' was leading his army met up with Khâlid bin Waleed, the latter sent the following letter to Hormuz.

"Accept Islam, it will be better for you. Or else Hormuz you and your people should continue to follow your religion and pay *Jizyah*. If you do not agree to either of these two conditions, you will be responsible for the consequences. If you suffer any harm or injury do not blame us. I have come to your area with people who are as fond of death as you are of life."

Hormuz looked at the letter very scornfully and did not even bother to reply. On the other hand, he arrogantly slapped his breast and stepped out on to the battlefield to test his strength against the Muslims.

Khâlid bin Waleed bringing into play his experience and military tactics divided the army of Islam into three divisions. Mathna bin Hârithah, 'Adi bin Hâtim and 'Asim bin 'Amr Tameemi رضي الله عنهم were appointed Generals of each of the three divisions. Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi take part in *Jihâd* under the command of his brother 'Asim bin 'Amr Tameemi. Another military strategy Khâlid bin Waleed adopted was to command the three generals to occupy the banks of any stream, where the Iranian troops might be encamped. In fact, he told them to try and take over control of all the streams they possibly could. He reminded them that only that army could put up a strong opposition who had access to plenty of water.

The Muslim army encamped at a stream and a violent battle ensued there between the opposing armies. Hormuz came out into the battlefield and shouted out a challenge:

"Send any of your heroic warriors to engage with me in single combat. Today we will find out who has the real power, and who has the right to live here."

When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ heard this scornful declaration he came forward and faced him in regal rage. The contest started and their swords flashed; in no time Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ had Hormuz flat on the ground. He had made such a violent thrust with his sword that the Iranian General's head rolled away in the dust. When the Iranian army saw the fate of their General, they broke all the rules and traditions of warfare and attacked Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. According to the unwritten rules of warfare, in single combat only one soldier should have advanced to take the place of the fallen man. When Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ saw this dangerous situation, he immediately jumped into the fray. Flashing his sword left and right, he advanced reaping the heads of the enemy as if they were a field of crops ready for harvesting. He did not want any harm or injury to befall his Commander-in-Chief. The Iranian army was stunned to see that one man was spreading destruction and ruin with the speed of lightening and racing forward so swiftly that no man could overtake him or stop him. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ escaped this dangerous assault on his life by the skin of his teeth and acclaimed the exploits of this great soldier very highly. At this critical juncture, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ displayed such courage and daring that every soldier of the army had only praise for him. It was not for nothing that Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ had once said that the army which boasted a soldier of the calibre of Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ could not face defeat. Surely this was an award for bravery received from the court of the Caliph for services rendered.



Terrified of the power and daring of the Muslim army, many of the top ranking Iranian leaders and chieftains of tribes offered to compromise. Very politely Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ accepted their offer and set the terms of their duties and responsibilities. When the army of Islam won the Battle of Hira, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ offered eight extra units of prayer as thanks to Allâh and then turned his attention to his companions, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ being one of them. He said:

"I fought the most dangerous battle of my life at Motah. In suppressing the insurgency of the enemy I broke nine swords; in the field of war I have not seen any enemy as tough as the Iranians. Especially in the Battle of Alees, they reached the peak of their ability to endure."

He was not bragging; in reality he was informing the *Mujahdien* under him of his military exploits, so that they could learn from his experiences. After this Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ declared Hira to be the main cantonment area or barracks and appointed Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ Commander of the barracks. He himself marched onwards.

Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ started work to extend the area of the barracks. He targeted a nearby area called Haseed. This led to a conflict with the enemy and a fierce battle broke out. The enemy General was killed, their troops were demoralised, and Haseed came under the complete control of the Muslims. This success was of course due to the efforts of Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ.

When Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ heard of the treachery and deceit of the Romans against the Muslim army, he was enraged and exclaimed passionately, "I will cure this uprising among the Romans and their devilish designs through Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ."

After this he sent a messenger to inform him that the vital need of the hour was to advance towards the Romans in order to teach them a lesson. Immediately he got the order from the court of the Caliph, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ organised an army to oppose the Romans using the military skills of Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ, who was his trustworthy confidant.

Half the army was left there under the command of Mathna bin Hâarithah ﷺ and with the other half of the army he set out for Syria. Bringing to the fore his military skills, he divided the army into four sections. The *Maimnah* or right wing was placed under the Command of 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ; he appointed Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ﷺ Commander of the left wing. In the centre was the man with the title of *Ameen-ul-Ummah*, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl ﷺ was appointed to lead the last section of the army. Qa'qâ' bin

'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ used his sword to achieve astounding feats that will be remembered in history for all time. After winning a splendid victory against the Romans, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ recited some verses extempore, which are considered gems of classic Arabic literature.

This engagement became known in history as the Battle of Yarmook. The Muslim army achieved a glorious triumph; during this battle news was received of the passing away of the first Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ succeeded him as the next Caliph. And as soon as he assumed office he removed Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ from his post and appointed Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ as the next Commander-in-Chief. These were perplexing events!

The Romans fled to Damascus to find refuge and locked up the gates of the city. The new Commander-in-Chief, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ, leading the army, advanced towards Damascus in pursuit. Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ and Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ were part of this army as ordinary soldiers. The Muslim army surrounded Damascus and this siege lasted for four months. The walls of the city were so high that it was impossible for the *Mujâhideen* to either cross them or leap over them. They made a ladder from ropes and tied iron hooks at one end of the ladder, so that when it the ladder was thrown on the wall it would hook into the top of the wall. Once the ladder was firmly fixed in the wall, the two great generals succeeded in jumping across the wall, one by one. As soon as they got into the city they ran towards the main gates; pushing back the men near them, they opened the gates in a moment. The *Mujâhideen*, shouting 'Allâho Akbar' rushed into the city of Damascus. After a few brief skirmishes the *Mujâhideen* took control of the city. The key role was played by Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi and Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنهما, in the capture of Damascus. The manner in which these two great heroes risked their lives and their modus operandi to enter a seemingly impregnable city are stupendous exploits in the military history of Islam.

Before the battle of Qâdissiyah the great general, Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ, had asked the famous orators and poets of the day to put to use their skills of creativity and eloquence to arouse and revive the spirits and emotions of the *Mujâhideen*. Among them were Mughaira bin Sho'ba, 'Asim bin Umr At-Tameemi, Huthaifah bin Yamân, Talah and

Qais bin Thâbit رضي الله عنه who were all noteworthy poets. They used their inborn talents skilfully and aroused the yearning for *Jihâd* so well that in the eyes and hearts of the *Mujâhideen* all else was forgotten.

After listening to these rousing speeches and verses the hearts of the *Mujâhideen* were moved so deeply that they were all agog and ready to enter the battlefield as if they were going to attend a joyous reception. Everyone was talking eagerly and excitedly about the forthcoming battle. Suddenly the booming voice of the renowned General Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ echoed in the air and everyone fell silent to listen to him. He said;

"All the *Mujâhideen* should recite the Surâh of *Jihâd* that is Surâh Al-Anfal, and Surah At-Tauba and remain standing at their positions. First we will offer the *Zuhr* (noon prayers); then I will raise the cry of 'Allâho Akbar'. You will be expected to be ready at the first cry; then when I shout out the slogan a second time, everyone should be ready and set to go. When I repeat the cry the third time, all of you will also roar out 'Allâho Akbar' after me. And simultaneously the cavalry will come forward into position in front of the infantry. When I call out *Allâho Akbar* the fourth time, then you will say '*la haula wala quwwatha illa billâh*' - 'There is no power, but for the Power of Allâh' - and all together assault the enemy."

When the great General gave the call the fourth time, appearing on the ramparts of the city, the enthusiastic *Mujâhideen* fell on the enemy attacking them. Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ himself was sick and could not take an active part in the battle, but seated on the ramparts he kept on issuing instructions on the strategy to be used. The first day of the Battle of Qâdissiyah was very hard on the Muslims. Huge elephants were being used by the enemy and were wreaking havoc on all sides. Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ was watching this dreadful sight sorrowfully. In a pained voice he called out to his men.

"O Banu Tameem you are very experienced, you can very easily use your swift steeds and camels. Can't you manage to overcome these elephants? Think of some tactics you can use, otherwise they will prove to be a real threat to the Muslim forces."

Listening to the words of their leader, Banu Tameem became even more enthusiastically alert and told their best marksmen to take aim and shoot their arrows into the eyes of the elephants. When this was done the elephants panicked and ran amok; stampeding they trampled their own army. Taking advantage of the situation some *Mujâhideen* started cutting off their trunks; this move caused an even greater stampede. That day the fighting carried on till late into the night and almost five hundred Muslims were martyred.

The first day of the Battle of Qâdissiyah is known as the 'Youm' or day of Armâth. General Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ did not take part in the fighting that day as he was expecting to be called to the court of the Caliph any moment. 'Umar Farooq sent a message to Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ that he should send fresh reinforcements to Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ without delay. Obeying his orders, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ sent an army under Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ. This great General brilliant strategist and tactician divided his men into groups of ten, and ordered them to enter into the battlefield after regular intervals. His aim was to give the enemy the impression that this was not an army but a tide of men in full endless flow! The enemy would think that they could not possibly fight against such endless numbers, and their morale would sink. This plan proved very successful. The Muslim army had six thousand men; of these five thousand were from the Banu Rabee'ah and one thousand were Yemenis. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ appointed Hishâm bin 'Utbah as the leader of this contingent and Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ was given the title of Commander of the advance guard. The latter, giving proof of his extraordinary bravery and courage shouted out a challenge asking who would step forward and oppose him that day. One of the enemies called out that he would answer his challenge. Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ asked who he was and what was his name. He answered:

"My name is Bahman Jathwiyah, and the whole world knows me and stands in awe of me. Look at my pomp and authority and experience at first hand my magnificence and grandeur. I have come today as your nemesis and a calamity. Who can face my sharp sword? You will face me? *Ha Ha Ha!* Go young lad

and send someone else. You will not be able to withstand even one of the stabs I will make. This war is for men, and not for youths. Go, lad, and enjoy the pleasures of life to the full and some experienced person forward to fight against me."

On hearing these scornful remarks, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ immediately attacked the vain bragging champion so forcefully that he tore him to pieces. Certainly Bahman Jathwiyah was no ordinary man; he was the chieftain and Commander of the enemy army. After killing him, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ called out and asked who would come out to face him next. Two experienced Generals of the Iranian army stepped out. One was called Bairzân and the other was Bandwân. When the Muslims *Mujâhideen* saw two men come out to face one person, one of them, Hârith bin Dhiyân stepped out and killed Bandwân. The *Mujâhideen* now adopted a unique method to overpower the enemy. They covered their camels with black sheets and rode them into the battlefield; when the huge and murderous elephants saw these strange monsters they ran from there because they had never seen any animals like these before. Thus, the scales tilted in favour of the Muslims on the second day. This came to be known as the 'Youm-Aghwâth.' The brilliant General Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ killed thirty of the bravest enemy soldiers with his sword. The achievements of Qa'qâ' ﷺ are written in golden letters in military history. Two thousand *Mujâhideen* attained martyrdom and ten thousand of the Iranian enemy were slain.

When the sun set the next evening and the darkness of night had spread over four corner of the earth, the fighting stopped. The armies went to their encampments to rest. The *Mujâhideen* went to sleep to regain their energies for the following day. But the one person who could not rest was Qa'qâ' ﷺ, who was using his quick and fertile mind to plan a comprehensive strategy for the third day. Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ took a look at the battlefield and said:

"O believers of the Allah, if you wish to bathe the bodies of the martyrs do so, or if you wish to bury them covered with their bleeding wounds you are free to do so. Because the Prophet ﷺ has said, 'the martyr will be raised on the Day of Judgement with his bleeding wounds smelling like saffron.'"

The martyrs were buried with full military honours and the wounds of the injured were treated.

When the sun rose on the morning of the third day, both the armies came out on the battlefield. Again the mammoth elephants were seen with the Iranian army in the battlefield. Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ sent for those Iranian soldiers who had accepted Islam, in order to consult with them. He asked them what was the most effective way to make these giant elephants retreat. They told him to aim at the eyes and trunks of the elephants; the result would be that they would race backwards out of the battlefield, screeching and screaming and destroying their own army. Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ then sent for Qa'qâ' ﷺ and his brother, 'Asim bin 'Amr ﷺ and revealing this secret, told them to try it out that day. So the two brothers targeted the white elephant's eyes. Simultaneously, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ displaying great courage and valour attacked the trunk of the elephant with his sword; it fell far away on the ground as he cut it off. The elephant, in a mad rage, ran screaming; its rider fell on the ground and many Iranian soldiers were trampled under it. Similarly another *Mujâhid* attacked another elephant and targeted its eyes and trunk. The animal was blinded and started to scamper around the battlefield causing confusion. The fierce battle continued till darkness began to spread; the whole atmosphere was polluted with dirt and dust, and as a consequence one could not see clearly who was attacking whom, and whose sword was slitting whose throat. Yet the battle continued the whole night until it was almost dawn. Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ was going around the battlefield and mowing down anyone who came in front of him. Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ was sitting on the foremost part of the ramparts and offering supplications to Allâh for him.

Fighting his way through the ranks of the enemy, Hilal bin Alqama finally succeeded in reaching the place where the Iranian General, Rustum had entrenched himself. When he saw that his safety was endangered, he fled. In front of him was a stream; in order to save his life he jumped in. Hilal bin Alqama also jumped in, in pursuit of him. They both started wrestling in the middle of the stream, but Rustum was no match for Hilal bin Alqama. At last the latter inflicted a fatal wound on Rustum, and he collapsed in the water. Catching him by his

feet Hilal bin Alqama, dragged him out of the water, and chopped off his head with his sword. Then he announced loudly:

"By the Lord of the Ka'bah I have slain the Iranian General, Rustum, Look! The body of the enemy of Allâh has become a sign of warning and an admonition for all men."

The Iranian army was demoralised on seeing their General's dead body, and was forced to surrender in the battlefield of Qâdissiyah. This day is remembered in history as *Youm-e-'Ammâs*.

'Umar Farooq was very happy when he heard of the victory at Qâdissiyah. He asked Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs which *Mujâhid* had played the most prominent role in the victory. He replied:

"The most vital role at Qâdissiyah was played by Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi. I was astounded to see him so passionately moved by the spirit of *Jihâd* that using his physical strength he assaulted the enemy thirty times. In every attack he killed an Iranian General. There is no doubt that his exploits in Qâdissiyah deserve a golden chapter in the military history of Islam."

The great General Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs decided to attack Madyan, but there was a river which needed to be crossed. The Iranians had destroyed all the bridges to prevent the Muslim army from entering the city by crossing them. After a great deal of consideration it was decided to set off on the journey invoking the Name of Allâh and cross the stream on horseback. Meanwhile the Iranian forces were waiting on the opposite riverbank.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs divided the army into two parts. The command of one section was given to Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr and the other to his brother, 'Âsim bin 'Amr At-Tameemi. His strategy was that one troop of the army would jump in to the river in order to cross it; after some time the next troop would descend into the river. Thus if the first part of the army faced any problems, the second would be fresh and be able to assist them. The *Mujâhideen* descended into the river, laughing and joking, and advanced as if they were on a trip enjoying themselves, strolling along some beautiful fields. Seeing this carefree attitude the Iranian soldiers were demoralised; getting terrified of these advancing forces they fled, shouting:

"These are Monsters, Giants and Jinn who are coming to swallow us!"

The Muslim army reached the opposite bank safely and entered the city of Madyan under their Commander, Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs رض. The people of the city had also run away to save their lives, leaving their homes empty; the city was completely deserted. The scene was certainly a warning for the discerning mind and sensitive soul. Madyan was taken peacefully, without any resistance. The Muslim army continued on its onward march towards its objective. The famous Arab heroes continued their mission and fighting, sometimes as generals and commanders and at times even as ordinary soldiers. In spite of winning numerous victories they did not amass wealth nor did they hunger for power and sovereignty over conquered lands, only one image dominated their minds - 'The pre-eminence of Islam and honourable crown of martyrdom.'

Jalula' is the name of an important centrally located city on the road to Khurasan. It is about forty miles from Madyan. Many roads lead from here to various other towns in Iran. A long river flows by the side of the city and many large and small ships ply on it. The people of Madyan had fled from their city and found refuge here. They wanted to make this city a centre from which they could organise a movement to resist the Arabs; they felt that if they did not unite against the Arabs, the Iranian people would be destroyed forever. There would be no safe-haven for them anywhere in the world. Their leader Yazdagar had fled from Madyan and taken refuge. From here he sent a huge Iranian army under the Iranian General, Mehran Razi to Jalula' to give a befitting reply to the Arab *Mujâhideen*. Iranian army dug a huge trench around the city, so that it could provide a defence for the city.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs رض informed Caliph 'Umar Farooq رض about the prevailing situation and asked for his guidance. He immediately sent back the messenger with instructions to send an army of twelve thousand *Mujâhideen* under General Hishâm bin Utbah رض and appoint Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi رض Commander of the advance guard. And in order to help the latter he should organise a right wing and a left wing of the army as well.

Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr رض besieged the city of Jalula' and the Iranians shut themselves up in the fort. In order to arouse the passion for *Jihâd* among the soldiers, the Commander-in-Chief, Hishâm bin Utbah رض gave an emotionally charged speech. He said:

"For the sake of Allâh! Conduct your life in these times of trial in a disciplined manner. He will grant you a reward in the Hereafter and also you will get a lot of booty here. And all you do, should be to gain the reward from Allâh."

After listening to the stirring speech of his leader, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr رض launched a vigorous attack. Coming down to the entrance of the trenches, he shouted:

"Muslims your Commander-in-Chief has got down into the trenches; follow him quickly. Now we have to cross it and enter the city - this is vital. There is no other way to succeed; see that no person stays back."

After hearing these words all the men jumped into the trench, and in no time crossed over and clashed with the besieged men. The Iranians could not withstand this fierce onslaught and retreated. The whole city came under the control of the Muslims. And then small cities after one another, The big city Qasr-e-Shireen and Halwân were conquered, and finally all the Iranian villages and small cities came under Muslim rule. Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr رض took up residence in Halwân, which is inhabited even to this day.

The figs and apples of Halwân are known for their quality, sweetness and delicious taste. The figs are appreciated all over the world and are known as the 'Queen of Figs.' Since this city is situated in a valley, the beautiful streams present a scenic beauty of spring.

The Muslim army conquered Halwân after they had taken Jalula'. When the Iranian Emperor heard of the coming of the Muslims he fled from Halwân to Isphahân and found refuge there. But he was fated to keep on fleeing from every place.

Nahâwind is a huge and ancient city. Great scholar Yâqut Hamawi, in his book, *Ma'jam Al-Baldâ'în* has given detailed information about the

city. The foundations of this city were laid during the time of the Prophet Noah عليه السلام. In the local language Nahâwind means a double blessing and goodness. According to some traditions this city was conquered in 19th Hijrah, and according to others in 20th Hijrah. In this engagement the Commander-in-Chief was Nu'mân bin Maqrân Mazni رضي الله عنهما. As he was sending the army, Caliph 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما said:

"If Nu'mân bin Maqrân Mazni رضي الله عنهما is martyred, Huthaifah bin Yammân should take over as Commander. If he too is killed then Jareer bin 'Abdullâh رضي الله عنهما should take over the responsibility. If he martyred, then Mughirah bin Sha'bah رضي الله عنهما should take command of the army. After him Ash'âth bin Qais رضي الله عنهما is to perform the duties of the commander."

The Iranian had taken refuge in the fort and dug trenches all around Nahâwind for protection, so the Muslim army besieged the city. Since the Iranian were not coming out to confront them, the Commander-in-Chief, Nu'mân bin Maqrân Mazni رضي الله عنهما, finally called for a meeting his most experienced generals. Among them were brave men such as 'Amr bin Muthna, 'Amr bin Ma'âdi Karb and Talihah bin Khawaled رضي الله عنهما.

They all suggested that a few *Mujâhideen* should be sent into the city under the leadership of an experienced general. When the Iranians attacked them they should race back. This would boost the courage of the Iranians and they would set out in a chase. Once they came out of the city, the Muslim army could launch a powerful attack. These *Mujâhideen* who were to thus play on their lives were led by Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr رضي الله عنهما. He, displaying great courage and daring, entered the city of Nahâwind with lightening speed. When the Iranian army saw this unexpected threat they panicked; then they plucked up their courage and got ready to fight. When they advanced forward to battle with the invaders, Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr رضي الله عنهما and his men, in accordance with their plan, zoomed around and started to race back. Thus encouraged by what they saw as a retreat, the Iranian army came out into the battlefield. The whole of the Muslim army collectively made a powerful attack. A fierce battle followed, and in no time the field of *Jihâd* was red with the blood of those killed from the two armies.

The Commander-in-Chief, Nu'mân bin Maqrân Mazni ﷺ, exhibiting extraordinary bravery was martyred. When the Iranian Commander-in-Chief, Ferozan, saw the battle was at a critical juncture, he fled the field and started to climb up a mountain. But Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ, displaying great daring, gave chase, caught up with him and finally killed him.

This great enviable and heroic *Mujâhid*, who was said to equal more than a thousand ordinary soldiers, immersed in his deep love for Allâh ﷺ and the Prophet ﷺ, had the honour of killing three of the enemy Generals in the battle of Qâdissiyah. He was an experienced warrior, who in every battle with the Iranians terrified the enemy with his military prowess; he never craved for wealth or amassed it and never lusted after political power or worldly status. In the Battles of Jamal and Safain he was the ambassador of 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ and in these two battles his sword remained in its scabbard. He was a sympathetic *Mujâhid* who after spending the last days of an exemplary and enviable life in the city of Kufa finally met with his Creator.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Sharjeel bin Hasanah

The friendship of Khâlid bin Waleed and Sharjeel bin Hasanah رضي الله عنهما performed a great role in the exaltation and eminence of Islam." (Historians)

Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ

He was the envy of many - a handsome youth who took part with great ardour and enthusiasm in the Battle of Yamâmah. His character was refined to pure gold by the company and influence of the Prophet ﷺ. As an experienced, brave and fearless *Mujâhid* he had performed amazing feats in the fields of war under the command of Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما. He had knocked at the gates of Jordan victoriously. He was a reliable and trustworthy Companion and scribe who had attained the honour of being asked to write down the Divine revelations. In the field of the missionary work, of inviting people to Islam, he was effective because of his cultured, polite and courteous behaviour. He was a very popular governor in Jordan because of his administration and, just and fair. Throughout his life the Prophet ﷺ reposed complete trust and confidence in him; and he played a very active role in every battlefield of *Jihâd*. In fact he exploited his Allâh given talents and skills to play an important role in every field for the exaltation of Islam.

This youth came to be known in the annals of history as Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ. He was the son of 'Abdullâh bin Matâ' bin 'Amr bin Kundah. His mother was named Hasanah. He was an infant in his mother's lap when his father passed away. After passing the period of her '*Iddat*' his mother married Sufyân bin Mua'mmar Ansari. This is why his name rather than his father's name knew by him mother. His mother was from the tribe of Banu 'Âdul who were inhabitants of Bahrain and allies of the Banu Zahra. This respectable lady also had the honour of migrating to Ethiopia with her son Sharjeel ﷺ.

When the benefactor of Mankind, first became the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ was under the guardianship of his

stepfather, Sufyân bin Mua'mmar Ansari and being brought up by him. By his mother's second marriage he had two brothers, Khâlid bin Sufyân and Janadah bin Sufyân, who were born soon after each other.

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ proclaimed himself as the Messenger of Allâh, both his parents had the honour to be among the first to accept Islam. Thus from his very childhood he had the chance to grow up in Islamic environment. During this critical period the newly converted Muslims underwent great hardships and suffering. They were ground in the mills of cruelty and oppression. Their naked bodies were subjected to the whiplash and they were dragged naked across the pebbled sands of the burning desert.

They were made to lie down on burning fires and heavy stones were laid across their chests. All new method of torture was tested callously and cruelly on them.

Doubtless in the context of the spreading of the Message this was the most tragic and terrible period in the history of Islam. It chills the spine of any person who turns the pages of this dark period filled with blood and gore. Which cruelty was left untried on these unarmed Muslims? Which torment was not tested on these innocent and pure bodies of Muslims? Which punishment did their bodies not taste?

It was only they whose lives had been blessed and brightened directly by the radiance of the Messenger's personality. Whose hearts had been illuminated by the True Faith, who could call out in a trance, as it were, the Name of Allâh ﷺ even as they were being tugged naked across the burning pebbles of the sandy desert or lying down on live coals. When the sufferings and, agony of the Quraish had exceeded all limits, these obedient and noble Companions received orders from the Prophet ﷺ to migrate towards Ethiopia. The Emperor Najâshi of Ethiopia was well-known in the Arab world for his justice and hospitality. Thus the very first caravan of oppressed migrants in the history of Islam set out for Ethiopia. It comprised eleven men and four women. They were provided accommodation and their days and nights passed in peace and tranquillity. One day they received news that there was peace in Makkah at last and Muslims were no longer subject to persecution. Their love for their motherland compelled them to return. When they reached there, their hearts filled with love and joy, but they found that

the news they had received was not correct. Things had not changed in any way, in fact the Quraish was targeting the Muslims even more and they were being inflicted with worse abuse and torment. Tired of this constant subjugation and tyranny, the Muslims were forced to migrate for a second time. This time round besides the women and children there were eighty men, who set out for Ethiopia. And this time Sharjeel (رضي الله عنه) was with his family among the members of the caravan.

They remained in Ethiopia till such time as the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madinah. When this news reached the Muslim migrants in Ethiopia that he had bid goodbye to Makkah and had moved permanently to Al-Madinah and settled there, they were delighted. Gradually they also started moving there.

Sharjeel (رضي الله عنه) also reached Al-Madinah with his parents. They stayed with the tribe of Banu Zareeq and he had the privilege of being educated by the Prophet ﷺ; then he was honoured by being asked to write down the Divine Revelations.

In the year 9th Hijrah the Prophet ﷺ, Commanding the Muslim forces set out for Tabook to grapple the problems. After his return he appointed Khâlid bin Waleed (رضي الله عنه) as the Commander of four hundred warriors to go to Domatul-Jandal to subjugate the Banu Kundah tribe. Their chieftain, Akidar bin 'Abdul-Malik, was a Christian.

Khâlid bin Waleed (رضي الله عنه) asked:

"O Messenger of Allâh ﷺ how can I conquer such a powerful enemy with such a small army?"

The Prophet ﷺ replied:

"You will find him engrossed in hunting a cow. You just have to move forward and capture him."

When he got the orders from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he set out for his destination. It was an enchanting moonlit night; Chief Akidar was enjoying himself, relaxing on his the balcony of his fort with his consort *Rubâb* and drinking wine. A few minutes later a beautiful healthy cow came running and started beating on the door of the fort. The queen rose up languorously and told her husband:

"Sweetheart your favourite prey has himself come up to your doorstep; darling why don't you go and hunt it down and bring it back. Then we can enjoy our night together even more with its roasted meat and wine."

The king, in order to please his beloved wife, ordered that his horse be readied. He went in pursuit of his prey with his brother Hassân and two slaves. All of them rode out of the fort arrogantly on their fast horses. They did not realise that somebody was surreptitiously watching all their movements. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was with his faithful followers, watching this scene angrily; he noted that the king had come out of his fort without any fear of danger. He had taken no precautionary steps. As soon as they raced out of the fort on their horses, they assaulted them suddenly. Akidar's brother Hassân was killed in the encounter, Akidar himself was captured and presented to the Prophet ﷺ. He forgave him on condition that he paid *jaziyah* annually. He returned to his kingdom and was installed on the throne. All the tribes inhabiting his kingdom and those living in the coastal areas off the Qulzam Sea next to Syria were to pay *jaziyah*. The Prophet ﷺ appointed Sharjeel ﷺ as his ambassador to collect these taxes.

The king of Eela, Yahna bin Robah, on his own reached the court of the Prophet ﷺ, at the head of a delegation of tribal chiefs. He wished to buy peace by paying *jaziya*. In reality these tribes were frightened by the domination of the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ gave them a written guarantee; it was also noted down in the document that Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ would perform the duties of an ambassador of the Prophet ﷺ, thus Sharjeel ﷺ was honoured by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

After the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ succeeded to the caliphate. Immediately sedition and revolts reared their head all over the Islamic Empire. The most terrible treachery was the threat of apostasy. The newly converted Muslims started deserting Islam and turning towards *kuffâr*.

Hardly Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ had returned from Syria after taking part in *Jihâd* continuously for two months, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ installed him as Caliph and left Al-Madinah leading a Muslim army. He reached Rabthah where Banu 'Abas, Banu Zabyân and Banu 'Abdah Manâh bin Kanânah had turned traitors to Islam. He raised the flag of

Jihâd against them and after a violent war they had to face defeat. But the apostate tribes did not learn any lesson from this satiation. On the other hand many of them established relations with Taleehah bin Khawaled Asdi and Musâlimah Kaththâb. These two took advantage of the opportunity to declare that they themselves were prophets. The net of deceit and falsehood that they had spread succeeded in entrapping people very fast. To control this threat to the infant Islamic state, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ did not leave any stone unturned.

The other big evil rearing its head during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, people started refusing to pay *Zakât*. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ declared *Jihâd* against such people and he faced this tempestuous period with great courage, daring and determination. He declared in no uncertain terms:

“I will claim *Zakât* from the person who handed in even a piece of rope as *Zakât* during the reign of the Prophet ﷺ. If he refuses to pay what is due, I will use force to extract it from him and hand it in to the *Baitul-Mâl*.”

In order to root out and exterminate these evils once and for all, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ organised eleven armies. He sent 'Ikrimah ﷺ to oppose Musâlimah Kaththâb, and he ordered Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ to provide him with reinforcements. But 'Ikrimah ﷺ was a little hasty and attacked Muslimah as soon as he reached Yamâmah. Musâlimah Kaththâb had entered the battlefield with forty thousand warriors, and naturally, 'Ikrimah ﷺ faced defeat. Since he had not waited for the reinforcements of Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ and tried to win this difficult engagement, he suffered heavy damages. When the Caliph learnt of this he was very annoyed and he dismissed him. He told him not to return to Al-Madinah but to reach Huthaifah and 'Arafjah who were battling against the peoples of 'Oman and Muhrah.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ sent a messenger to Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ asking him to wait where he is for the arrival of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. When Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ received this order from the Caliph he stopped; the soldiers under him were rested and fresh. Some time later Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ reached there, and took him along with his army and set off for Yamâmah to oppose Musâlimah Kaththâb. He was already encamped in the battlefield, at the head of his forces, ready and

fully armed and equipped. Their morale was very high after their previous victory. But under the command of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, the Muslim army routed them displaying courage, daring and experience. Musâlimah and his army fled and found refuge in a garden. The Muslim army pursued them and started mowing them down. There were the bodies of all those killed lying all everywhere; in fact this garden came to be known as, 'Hadeeqatul-Mau' (Garden of Death). Musâlimah Kaththâb was clinging to a wall, terrified out of his wits. Wahshi bin Harb targeted him and killed him. He was the same person who had martyred Hamzah ﷺ. When Musâlimah fell to the ground lifeless, a female voice could be heard wailing out in grief. She was screaming.

"O people look! A dark-skinned Negro has killed my handsome chieftain! What will happen to me now? Now even the day will seem like night to me!"

In the Battle of Uhud the same Wahshi bin Harb, in the days of ignorance, before he had accepted Islam, had martyred Hamzah ﷺ, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ. After he was enlightened with the knowledge of Islâm, he often used to remember this black deed of his and weep. Seeing his state the Prophet ﷺ, who was sent by Allâh ﷺ to be the very image of Mercy and Kindness for all the worlds, said to him gently,

"Don't worry, all the sins committed by a person, before he accepts Islam are automatically forgiven and erased."

But Wahshi bin Harb had decided that he would atone for his sin by killing a very powerful enemy of Islam. At last he had achieved his aim, and breathed easy after killing a very strong and dangerous adversary of Islam, Musâlimah Kaththâb.

The friendship of Khâlid bin Waleed and Sharjeel bin Hasanah رضي الله عنهما played a very prominent role in the eminence of Islam.



The Muslim army under the leadership of Khâlid bin Waleed, Mathna bin Hâarithah and Sharjeel bin Hasanah رضي الله عنهما taught the Iranians some tough lessons in Iraq. They inflicted fatal wounds on the apostates in Bahrain and Qadhâ'ah; in Yamâmah they slew the picture of deceit and *kufr*, Musâlimah Kaththâb.

Next it was the turn of the Romans. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ heard that the Romans had started military movements on the borders of the Arabian Peninsula and planned to inflict irreparable damages on the Muslim army; he also came to know that they had developed relations with the tribes inhabiting the northern areas. Considering the overall situation, he sent written orders to the generals in command on all the frontiers.

* He wrote to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ:

"Settle down in the Valley of Teema' do not move out from there. It is essential that you stay there and try your utmost to cultivate relations with the tribes inhabiting the surrounding areas and form alliances with them. You are strictly ordered not to launch any offensive on any tribe first; if on the other hand, if any tribe should attack you first you should give a fitting reply. Under all circumstances you should continue to ask for Divine Assistance. The duty of a Muslim is to advance and not to retreat. Remember you are to move forward and not to back off."

* The next orders were sent to 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ.

"O Abu 'Abdullâh, though I had appointed you to collect *Zakât* from certain tribes, I now wish to give you a duty which will be beneficial for you both in this world and in the Hereafter."

Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ replied:

"I am just an arrow and you are the archer of Islam you have full authority to send me in any direction you wish."

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ appointed him Governor of Palestine and instructed him to reach there immediately and take charge.

* Waleed bin 'Uqbah ﷺ was appointed Governor of Jordan. At the time he had been assigned to collect *Zakât* dues from the people of Qadhâ'a. Waleed bin 'Uqbah ﷺ joined up with Khâlid bin Sa'eed ﷺ and challenged the Roman General Mahân, but he was an extremely intelligent man. He surrounded them and killed many soldiers of the Muslim army.

When Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ came to know of this critical situation he asked Waleed bin Uqbah ﷺ to join with Khâlid bin Sa'eed ﷺ to come to Al-Madinah. Although he was very grieved about the

situation he did not betray his true feelings as it might have affected their morale. He felt they would lose courage. Abu Bakr Siddiq رض was debating within himself as to whom to appoint as Commander of the forces going to Yarmook, when Sharjeel bin Hasanah رض reached Al-Madinah after travelling all the way from Iraq. He exclaimed:

“The man I was looking for has come to me on his own!”

He named him commander of three thousand men and ordered him to go to Yarmook. It is to be noted that Sharjeel bin Hasanah رض was the commander of one of the armies; there were three others who were ordered to march towards Yarmook. The strategy was that all four would meet up and surround Yarmook.

Sharjeel bin Hasanah رض was given the responsibility of the first troop of the army. The second troop was under the command of 'Amr bin 'Aas رض. The commander of the third troop was Yazid bin Abu Sufyân رض and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah, was nominated as the Commander-in-chief.

When the Roman army heard of the advance of the Muslim army, they sent a message to their King Herqal to inform him of the latest situation. On receiving this news he himself came down to Hamas. Realising that the situation was very grave he ordered his army to prepare for war. He decided that he would also challenge the Muslim armies with four armies of his own. He ordered his brother Teudooreek to take command of an army of ninety thousand men and encounter 'Amr bin 'Aas رض. The famous Roman General Gurjah was to confront Yazid bin Abu Sufyân رض. Another Roman General, Derqas was asked to prepare to take on Sharjeel bin Hasanah رض. The experienced Roman General, Qeeqar bin Nestoos was made commander of sixty thousand men and asked to advance and fight against Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah.

And to face these huge numbers, the Muslim army had only twenty thousand *Mujâhideen*. Besides these there were six thousand *Mujâhideen* under the command of 'Ikrimah رض waiting for orders from the Caliph to join the rest.

When the Muslim Generals saw the enormous numbers in the Roman army, they held a consultation and decided that their best strategy would be to fight this battle under one Commander-in-Chief. Even earlier, in similar critical situations the Muslim army had been able to

defeat large numbers only because they had all united and joined forces together. A handful of *Mujâhideen* had won against overwhelming numbers of the enemy. Keeping in view the changed circumstances they sought the permission of Abu Bakr Siddiq . Khâlid bin Waleed was at the time fighting against the Iranians; the Caliph asked him to appoint another general in his place and reach Yarmook at the very first opportunity. As soon as he received the orders, he handed over the command of the army to Mathna bin Hârithah , and travelling over extremely difficult terrain reached Yarmook. The whole army reorganised itself under the command of Khâlid bin Waleed . One unique and innovative measure he took was to form a squad of one hundred fearless and experienced *Mujâhideen* and name them Defenders of Islam.¹ Among these was Sharjeel bin Hasanah . There were such men among these heroes who single-handed could rout a whole army.

Sharjeel bin Hasanah was in charge of the cavalry troops behind the right wing Commander, 'Amr bin 'Aas . At the centre of the troops was Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah . On the right and left 'Ikrimah and Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi were appointed commanders. The Commander-in-Chief Khâlid bin Waleed ordered these two great warriors to attack the enemy first. As soon as they got the orders they launched an offensive against the Romans. In the intense fighting which followed, the battlefield echoed with the clang of swords, neighing of horses and the screams and shouts of soldiers. In the middle of the army Sharjeel bin Hasanah , using varied tactics was attacking the enemy with his sword. The Muslim army was victorious by the Grace of Allâh . In this battle, Sharjeel bin Hasanah , with his experience and skill fought so bravely and courageously that he stunned the onlookers. His military exploits added yet another chapter to the golden pages of the history of Islam.

The news of the victory at Yarmook brought great joy for the Muslims, but with it came also the sorrowful news of the passing away of Abu Bakr Siddiq . All the *Mujâhideen* were saddened by this news. The other piece of news they received was that 'Umar Farooq had become the new Caliph of the Muslims. The first action of the new

¹ An early version of the modern commando units, ready to die for the cause.

Caliph was to dismiss the Commander-in-Chief, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ and appoint Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ in his place.

The Muslims had won a great victory at Yarmook, and this strengthened their morale. The new Commander-in-Chief, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ marched leading the armed forces. He learnt that the defeated Roman army was gathering at Fahal in order to avenge its defeat. This was an important cantonment of Syria, on the borders of Jordan. The great General Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ asked Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ for his advice on the policy to be adopted. The Caliph sent him instructions. He wrote to him:

"Leading the army yourself go towards Damascus, as this city has a strategic importance and it is the capital of the Romans. If Fahal is taken first it will be to the advantage of the Muslims. But if Damascus is conquered first that will also be a good opportunity. After receiving these orders from the Caliph, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ sent an army of trustworthy and experienced *Mujâhideen* to conquer Fahal."

After they had reached there and besieged the city, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ also arrived with fresh troops. The command of the advance guard was given to Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ. When the people of Fahal learnt of the danger, they fled to Beesan, a northern city of Jordan, to save their lives. In order to save Fahal, they let water flood the city, so that it took on the appearance of a swamp. This, they thought, would make it difficult for the Muslim army to advance. But the *Mujâhideen* were able to take control of the city in just one night and a day. To advance towards Fahal and take control Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ exhibited great daring and clever planning. His wise action made the difficult task easy for the *Mujâhideen*. After total control had been established over Fahal, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ left for Damascus with the army. He organised the army in such a manner that Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was positioned in the centre, he himself took charge of the right wing and 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ was given charge of the left wing. The cavalry was under the Command of Ayadh bin Ghanem, and Sharjeel bin Hasanah رضي الله عنهما was in charge of the infantry.

The army of Islam reached Damascus in all its splendour and glory in the month of Moharram in year of 14th Hijrah. The citizens, sensing danger, had retreated into the fort. The famous historian Ibn Katheer in his 'Al Badaya wa Al Nahaya' writes that Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr At-Tameemi ﷺ encamped at the eastern gates and 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ set up his position at the 'Bâb Quma'. Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ and his troops were at the 'Bâb Farâdees,' and the area in front of 'Bâb Jâbiyah' was occupied by Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ. Yazid bin Abi Sufyân ﷺ was at 'Bâb Sagheer.' The siege of Damascus lasted ten months; finally Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ﷺ succeeded in jumping over the walls of the fort and getting inside. When he opened the gates Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ entered the city with five thousand *Mujâhideen*, gained control and hoisted the flag of Islam. After this, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ order to Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ to set out with a huge army to conquer Beesân. This city is located at the border of Jordan-Syrian borders. It was noted for its fertility, its special quality of dates and its streams of salt and fresh water. The citizens of Beesân enclosed themselves in the fort for protection. After remaining in a state of siege for some days they came out to do battle; they had realised that if they remained longer inside the fort, they could not survive. So they preferred to fight it out in the open battlefield. But they could not withstand the army of Islam and they appealed for a truce. The General of the Muslim army, Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ, accepted their plea and after signing a treaty provided them guarantee.

After conquering Beesân, Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ left for Tibriyah. This city was also taken quite easily and here too control was gained and a peace treaty was signed.

News reached the capital of the Islamic States, Al-Madinah, that the Romans had started preparations to retake Damascus under the leadership of their noted General, Artaboon. Their armies were gathered in large numbers at Ramlah and Ajnâdeen. In order to confront the Romans, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ sent Sharjeel bin Hasanah and 'Amr bin 'Aas رضي الله عنهما, saying:

"We have also brought an Arab Artaboon to face the Roman Artaboon. Now let us see what you mean by Artaboon! 'Amr

bin 'Aas ﷺ has the ability to face the greatest of Generals, and similarly Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ is no less in comparison with anyone else."

The two armies came face to face at Ajnâdain; the bugles were sounded and swords clashed. The *Mujâhideen* gradually moved forward axing down the enemy with their swords. At last the Roman general retreated and fled, and the *Mujâhideen* army entered Damascus. But the army of Islam pursued him even there; he then ran away to Egypt, terrified for his life. Thus Damascus came under the absolute control of the Muslims.

In the year 18th Hijrah, a plague spread through Syria; there was a long and dreadful famine in Hejâz. Because of drought it became the victim of an economic crisis. Looking at the situation of Ajnâdain city 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ said, it was punishment due to the wrath of Allâh. Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ said he should not say so as many servants of Allâh ﷺ had fallen prey to this disease and had gone onto the Hereafter. When the only son of Ma'ath bin Jabl ﷺ was stricken by plague he got very scared. When the son saw how troubled and anxious his father had become he recited the following *Âyah* from Sûrah Al-Baqarah:

"The Truth is from your Lord, so be not one of those who doubt." (2:147)

Replying spontaneously, Ma'ath bin Jabl ﷺ recited the *Âyah* from Sûrah Al-Sâffât.

"You shall find me if As-Sâbirûn (the patient)." (37:102)

'Umar Farooq ﷺ appointed Amir Mua'awiyah ﷺ Governor of Damascus and named Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ Governor of Jordan. These positions were given to them in acknowledgement of their services.

In 18th Hijrah Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ became another victim of the dread disease of plague, which proved fatal. It is to be noted that among the foremost Companions, Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ, Ma'ath bin Jabl ﷺ, Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ﷺ and Abu Mâlik Ash'ari - all fell victim to this disease. May Allâh ﷺ Bless these pure souls, and may the Heavens rain dew on their resting places.

Salamah bin Qais

‘Umar Farooq  said:

Salamah! I have appointed you Commander-in-Chief of the army, which will be attack Ahwâz, the western province of Iran.

Salamah bin Qais

Ahwâz, a province of Iran, is located in very mountainous terrain, on the border between Basra and Iran. During the Râshideen caliphates a very brave and warlike people lived there.

Basra was a newly inhabited city and it was the cantonment area of the Muslim army. From the point of view of defence it was a very sensitive area which was of crucial strategic importance. There was only one way to secure oneself from the continuous attacks of the Iranians and that was to establish complete control over Ahwâz, the western province of Iran.

One night the Caliph, 'Umar Farooq was taking a tour of the city at night and pondering over the problem of whom to appoint Commander-in-Chief of the army which was about to wage war on this very important front. The names of experienced and brave *Mujâhideen* kept coming to his mind, when the name of Salamah bin Qais came to him, he stopped short in his tracks. He said to himself:

"Great! This is the very man! This is the general I have been looking for. He will be the best man to lead the army in an attack on Ahwâz. The qualities of leadership are to be found in him at their best."

In the morning he sent for him and told him:

"Salamah! I have appointed you Commander-in-Chief of the army, which will be attack Ahwâz, the western province of Iran. I hope that you will fulfil the duties of your office. Set off on this expedition at the head of the army with the name of Allâh on

your lips. Remember, as soon as you enter the territory of the enemy, first invite them to accept Islam. If they accept Islam, will and good. If they do not join you to take part in *Jihâd*, just take *Zakât* from them. But if they do take part in *Jihâd* they will have the right to an equal share in the spoils. On the other hand, if they do not accept Islam, but appeal for peace and promise not to make war, then exact the tax of *Jizyah* from them and provide them with maximum security. Do not create any intolerable problems for them. If they refuse to pay *Jizyah* then wage war against them. May Allâh ﷺ be your Supporter and Helper. If during the course of the battle the Iranian army retreats into a fort, avoids coming out, and then agrees to surrender, do not accept this offer at face value. It is possible they are up to some deceitful trick and are being devious. They can cause the Muslim army irreparable harm. If they come out from the fort into the open and surrender arms then do not lift up your swords against them. But if they wish to wage war oppose them stubbornly. When you win the battle, do not go to extremes; neither should you be disloyal to anyone. Do not kill any woman, child or aged person; do not cut off noses or ears and maim the enemy. Do not destroy any crops or chop off any trees."

On hearing this speech advising him, he promised to obey the orders of the Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ; he then set out at the head of his army for Ahwâz with Caliph's good wishes and supplications for their success ringing in his ears.

The army had to face difficult situations on their journey. At times they had to climb up steep mountain slopes, at others they had to cross-stinking swampy areas on the plains. At other places there were poisonous snakes and scorpions to be seen crawling everywhere. But the *Mujâhideen* were intoxicated with the spirit of *Jihâd*, and oblivious to all these hardships the army of Islam advanced towards their destination. The daring yet wise and sincere leadership of the Commander-in-Chief Salamah bin Qais ﷺ, a true and faithful follower of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, gave courage to the troops and

kept their morale high. The Verses of the Qur'ân were always on the lips of the men as they marched. The air of the areas where they rested at nightfall echoed with the recitation of the Divine Verses of the Noble Qur'ân. Their entrancing sound used to perfume the atmosphere. The *Mujâhideen* used to irradiate and illuminate their hearts and souls by reciting the Noble Qur'ân for most of the night. The meaning of the Verses used to inspire them and they used to dip into this boundless treasure house and enrich themselves. Thus familiarity and friendship and love of the Noble Qur'ân was instrumental in making their arduous journey easy. The *Mujâhideen* had an earnest desire that this scented and sacred atmosphere should be theirs forever and their lives should end thus.

As per the instructions of 'Umar Farooq ﷺ, the general of the Muslim army, Salamah bin Qais ﷺ, invited the people of this western province of Ahwâz to accept Islam. But they bluntly refused this invitation and the Muslim army had no other option but to wage war. The *Mujâhideen* entered the field of battle for *Jihâd*. The battle heated up very fast and there was intense fighting. There were flames and the clang of swords resounded everywhere. The two sides were equally balanced. The *Mujâhideen* were filled with the passion for *Jihâd* and displayed amazing feats of bravery and strength. Finally the Muslim army was victorious and established full control over Ahwâz.

Once the battle was over, the spoils of war were collected. Salamah bin Qais ﷺ started distributing it among the *Mujâhideen* when suddenly his eye fell on a very beautiful and expensive necklace. He wanted to present it to Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ. He addressed the *Mujâhideen* and said:

"If I distribute this necklace among you all, it will be of no use to anyone, and by broken up this attractive glittering necklace will lose all its value and worth. If you give it to me willingly and without any regrets then I will present it to Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ."

It was a very reasonable idea and everyone unanimously agreed that it should be sent. He placed it in a beautiful case and told one of his relatives:

"Leave for Al-Madinah and once you reach, give the good news of the victory to the Caliph and present it to him. Take your servant along with you so he will be able to help you."

What occurred once he reached the capital, Al-Madinah, is an exemplary lesson for all men of integrity.

The relative of Commander-in-Chief Salamah bin Qais ﷺ with his attendant left very happily, thrilled with the positive feelings of joy, that he would be conveying the good news of the triumph to the Caliph; crossing the difficult mountainous terrain, he finally reached Al-Madinah. The rest of the tale should be heard in his own words. This is what he had to say:

"I met with Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ. It was mealtime and many friends were having food; the Caliph was sitting, leaning on his cane and instructing his special attendant, Yarfā' to serve different dishes of rice and meat to various people. And he was looking after the needs of his guests, asking him to serve more bread and soup and so on and so forth. When I approached him he asked me to be seated. I sat down and food was placed before me. I also had the honour to join and enjoy this delicious feast. When the people had finished eating he told his attendant to clear up and left. I followed him and when he was about to enter his house, I requested permission to enter with him. He gave it very kindly and lovingly. He sat down on a straw mat and leaned against a stuffed pillow. He offered one to me as well. There was a curtain hanging in the room; he looked towards it and told his wife, Umm Kulthoom, who was behind the curtain to serve him his meal. I felt that maybe Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ had had special food prepared for him. His wife, from behind the curtain, passed him a piece of bread fried in oil with some salt on it. Then he asked me to have food with him. Since it was only polite to obey him I took a few mouthfuls. His manner of eating was enchanting; I had never seen anyone eat

in such an excellent style. Then he again called out to his wife and asked her for some water. Again she gave him a bowl of water from behind the curtain. He asked me to have some first. Again obeying his order, I had some. I was very surprised because the barley paste I had made for myself was far more delicious. The food was very simple and even the food was not very tasty. Then he held the bowl and had the barley paste. After is offered this prayer of thanks to Allâh ﷺ:

“Thanks to Allâh Who fed us and quenched our thirst and satisfied us.”

Then I told him respectfully:

“Caliph I have been asked to give you this letter.”

He asked me from where I had come. I told him that the letter was from Salamah bin Qais ﷺ. He answered:

“I welcome the representative of Salamah bin Qais ﷺ. What happened to the army which was fighting against the Iranians in the western province of Ahwâz?”

I replied:

“O Caliph, Allâh ﷺ has given success and victory to the army of Islam.”

Then I gave him full details of that had happened during the war. After listening the detail, he said:

“Thanks to Allâh ﷺ for giving us success in this battle. Did you happen to pass through Basra?”

I answered in the affirmative. Then he asked me:

“What is the condition of the Muslims there?”

I replied that they were all right by the Grace of Allâh. He then asked how were the prices in the market. I said that all essential commodities were very cheap. He asked me what was the price of meat. This was because it was the favourite of the Arabs. They do not feel satisfied unless they partake of meat. I answered that plenty of meat was available and at low prices.

Then he looked towards the beautiful case I was carrying in my hand and asked:

“What is that in your hand?”

I replied that it was an expensive necklace which the Commander-in-Chief Salamah bin Qais رض had sent as a gift for you. He had got this as part of the spoils of war. As I said and presented the box to him. He opened the box and his eyes fell on the expensive and attractive gems gold and green in colour as they glittered richly. Turn purple with rage and flung the box on the ground. The strand of pearls snapped and lay strewn all over the place. Caliph ‘Umar Farooq رض commanded me to collect all the scattered pearls. And he ordered his special attendant, Yarfâ’ to lash me with all his strength as I bent to pick up the pearls. I started collecting the pearls and his attendant started lashing me. Then he told me. “O unfortunate man stand up!”

I stood upright and was trembling. Then he commanded me:

“Return immediately to Ahwâz and as soon as you reach there, distribute these pearls among the *Mujâhideen*.”

I respectfully said, ‘Caliph I will obey your orders.’

He looked at me, full of wrath and said:

“By Allâh, if this necklace is not distributed among the *Mujâhideen*, I will break your bones as well as those of the Commander-in-Chief.”

I raced my horse at breakneck speed and passing through those difficult roads, at last reached the presence of the Commander-in-Chief Salamah bin Qais رض. I told him what had happened and said:

“O Salamah if you want to save your life and mine, then please immediately distribute this necklace among the *Mujâhideen*.”

He asked me what had happened and why I was so terrified. Then I gave him all the details of what had happened with me.

Salamah bin Qais رض distributed the necklace in the *Majlis* (gathering) of the *Mujâhideen* right then and there.

'Utbah bin Ghazwân

'Utbah  said:

"I ask for Allâh protection from the condition where I may think myself to be very great now, but in the sight of Allâh I shall be considered very low."

'Utbah bin Ghazwān ﷺ

Tall and well-built, with a radiant face an attractive personality, and a sturdy build - this was his physical appearance. He had polished manners and was a man who practised abstinence, lived a clean and pious life. In the field of battle he was a brave soldier who could inflict fatal wounds for the cause of Islam.

In 14th Hijrah, in obedience to the command of 'Umar Farooq ﷺ, he built a beautiful new city, Basra, on the banks of the river Dajlah. He was leader who guided his people wisely and well. He displayed his mastery with the sword as a *Mujāhid* in the Battle of the Trenches, and the Battles of Badr, Uhud, Khaibar and Tâ'if. He was also one of those who took part in the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiah and was one of the fortunate and honoured ones who took part in the Bai'at Rizwan.

He was a great of the Muslim *Ummah* who entered Makkah triumphantly but modestly with the Prophet ﷺ and ten thousand other loyal *Mujāhideen* who had risked their lives. In the Battle of Tabook he was a hardworking soldier who was one of the 'Jaish Al-'Asrah'. He left lasting impressions of his courage and daring as a General. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ selected him to lead the army to conquer the southern area of Iraq after a great deal of thought. He ordered him to command a small contingent of the Muslim army to Iraq and Iran. These were his word of advice on this occasion:

"O 'Utbah, reach those limits of Arabia which are bordered by the lands of the non-Arabs, leading your men with complete trust in Allāh ﷺ. Always remember to keep before you the fear of Allāh ﷺ. You will have to deal with a cunning, deceitful and

hypocritical enemy. You will have to keep an alert mind; be courageous and wise in opposing him. Go and may Allâh be your Support and Help."

'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ was a brilliant and popular young man of the tribe of Banu Mâzan. He was the pride and envy of his people. During the pre-Islamic days his family was the ally of the tribe of Banu Nofil bin 'Abd Manâf. When he was thirty years old, the news was doing the rounds of Makkah that the beloved son of Âmenah, the grandson of 'Abdul-Muttlib and the son of 'Abdullâh had declared that he was a Prophet. His Message is that there is only One True Allâh. Only He is the Creator and the Master, and only He is the Provider and Helper and only He has control over Life and Death. When His claims became known there was a terrible tumult in Makkah.

The chieftains of the Quraish began to perpetrate the crudest atrocities on the newly converted Muslims. Seeing the helplessness of his followers, the Prophet ﷺ ordered them to migrate towards Ethiopia. 'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ was a member of the second caravan of the oppressed people which left Makkah. After living there in peace and security for some time he returned, as he was missing the Prophet ﷺ whom he loved deeply and also he was feeling restless and homesick.

When the Prophet ﷺ decided to migrate to Al-Madinah because the cruelty of the Quraish had become intolerable, 'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ again started to miss him. He was waiting for an opportunity to enjoy the company and friendship of his beloved Prophet ﷺ as early as possible.

In Shawwal, 1st Hijrah some youths set out armed under the leadership of 'Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl to put pressure on the newly settled Muslims. After travelling for some time they reached a place called Râbagh. A caravan of about eighty warriors who were under the leadership of 'Ubaidah bin Hârith ﷺ were also there.

Miqdâd bin Aswad and 'Utbah bin Ghazwân were members of the caravan which had come from Makkah. The leader of the caravan, 'Ikrimah was under the impression that because of family pride they

had accompanied him and would certainly be of some help. But when fighting broke out between the two forces of Good and Evil and the army of 'Ikrimah was defeated; the two intelligent and pure-hearted youths took this opportunity to join up with the *Mujâhideen*. Thus they reached Al-Madinah and gained the privilege of presenting themselves before the Prophet ﷺ and also got the distinction of migrating twice for the cause of Islam.

'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ played a very active role in all the *Ghazawât*.¹ His courage and daring were well known and his exploits were common topics of conversation. He showed great acumen, wise insight and expertise in planning strategies of war.

One night 'Umar Farooq ﷺ lay down to rest after his *'Isha* prayers, so that he could go out on his nightly incognito tours of the city to see that all was well with the *Ummah*. But he was not able to take a nap because the critical conditions in the war being fought on the Iranian borders was troubling him. The messenger of war had brought the news that whenever the Muslim army gathered strength to launch a powerful attack and defeat him, the enemy would get reinforcements and renew itself to face them. Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ was also told that reinforcements were reaching the Iranian forces from the city of Ablah. He made a firm decision to send an army to conquer Ablah and thus close off the route through which reinforcements were reaching the Iranian army.

But he had a scarcity of manpower, since the youths and the old men had already left their homes and gone for *Jihâd*. Thus very few men were left in Al-Madinah. On this occasion he used his celebrated secret weapon! He decided that using experienced commanders should make up for the shortage of soldiers. He took up the list of all the individuals present in Al-Madinah and examined it from the point of view of their military expertise and experience.

After a long period of reflection and consideration, he jumped up

¹ In those battles the Prophet ﷺ took part.

saying: "I have found him, yes, I have found him!"

Then again lying down he said to himself, 'This is a *Mujâhid* who has played a very prominent role in the battles of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq and in many others. His arrows and sword have never missed their aim. And he has also had the honour of migrating twice - to Ethiopia and to Al-Madinah. And he was one among those first fortunate Muslims who accepted Islam.'

In the morning 'Umar Farooq ﷺ said:

"Send 'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ to me."

He then sent an army of three hundred and nineteen *Mujâhideen* under his Command of 'Utbah bin Ghazwân to Ablah. He promised him that he would soon send a large number of *Mujâhideen* for his support. When the army got ready to leave he told them something of very great importance.

He said:

"'Utbah I am sending you towards Ablah. This is a very important and powerful stronghold of the enemy. My hope is with Allâh that He will help you. When you reach your destination, first invite the citizens to accept Islam. If they accept, they are your brothers. If they refuse to accept Islam, then demand *Jizyah*. If they refuse to pay *Jizyah* declare war on them. 'Utbah fear Allâh in fulfilling the responsibilities of your office. Avoid arrogance, haughtiness and boastfulness. Such habits are responsible for ruining your life in the Hereafter. You must bear in mind that it is due to the great goodness of Allâh ﷺ that you have received the benefits of moving with the Prophet ﷺ. Allâh ﷺ has granted you greatness and strength after frailty. At this time you are a popular General; all that you say will be listened to with respect, all your orders will be obeyed happily and willingly. Do not make the mistake of misusing this bounty of Allâh ﷺ, else you will regret it on the Day of Judgement. May Allâh keep you and me in His Protection. *Âmeen*."



'Utbah bin Ghazwân  left with his army. Besides his wife there were five other women, all wives of *Mujâhideen*. Passing over difficult terrain, they finally reached a very green and fertile spot near Ablah and encamped there. They did not have anything to eat, and when their hunger became unbearable, 'Utbah bin Ghazwân  sent some of his companions to look for something to eat. What happened then makes interesting reading. One of them narrates it thus:

"As were walking along searching for something eatable, we entered a small grove. There we saw two earthen pots. One was filled with dates and the other one had small yellow grains in it. We picked up both the pots and carried them to our Commander. One of our companions glanced at it and said they should be very careful, for it might be poison which the enemy had left behind to get rid of them. We all turned towards the dates and started eating them. One of our horses, meanwhile, broke his tether and went straight to the pot with the grains, put his mouth in and started to eat them with great enjoyment. By God, we thought we should kill the horse as it might suffer with the poison and die eventually. But one of our friends said we should wait and see. Anyway he was going to keep watch at night, if the horse seemed to be in pain he would kill him. When morning came they saw that nothing had happened to the horse and it was fine!"

One of the wives of the *Mujâhideen* said:

"I have heard my father saying that if poison is cooked, then the effect of the poison is neutralised."

She then picked some grains from the earthen pot and put them in one of their pans and put it on the fire. Then she pointed out that the husk was coming off from the grains, and white grains were appearing. Just to check out the taste we put them in bowl and gave them to the general. He told us to try them, taking the Name of Allâh  and when he had tasted them he found them to be delicious. Later we learnt these grains were called rice and were the favourite food of Iranians."



Ablah which 'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ had attacked with a small army was situated on the banks of the river Dajlah. It was a very secure city where the Iranians had built huge storehouses to safely stock their weapons. On the ramparts of the forts they had constructed towers to keep a watch on any approaching enemy. But none of these measures could impede the march of 'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ and his army.

'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ covered the spears in a decorative manner with some flags and gave them in the hands of the women and ordered them to walk behind the army. And he told them that when they neared the city they should stir up a lot of dust; the hazy atmosphere would thus reduce visibility. When they neared the city the Iranian army was aghast to see such a huge army advancing towards them. Their numbers were few and they were terrified for their lives. In sheer panic they jumped into the boats moored for emergencies on the river Dajlahh, and fled. 'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ, without any hindrance or opposition entered Ablah triumphantly. A short time later he conquered quite easily the surrounding towns and settlements. Here the army of Islam gained immense spoils, the value of which was difficult to assess.

After their success when one of the *Mujâhid* returned to Al-Madinah and was asked how the Muslims were doing there. He replied that they were fine and enjoying the comfortable life greatly. People in fact were keen to settle in Ablah permanently!



'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ thought that if the Muslims continued to stay for some time in the conquered cities and towns they would become lazy and begin to enjoy a soft life of idleness, ease and comfort. The culture, habits and customs of the conquered people would also influence them. Besides, their toughness and their resolve to do *Jihâd* in the way of Islam would weaken. So he wrote a letter to Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ requesting his permission to found a new city; he also pinpointed the site he had selected. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ granted permission and the name proposed for the new city was Basra.

'Utbah bin Ghazwân ﷺ drew up the plan for the new city. First a huge mosque was constructed. It became the centre for all the work

being carried out for the emergence of Islam as a great world power. Caravans used to be organised and sent from here for the purpose of *Jihâd*. The *Mujâhideen* built houses here for themselves, but their commander did not build a house for himself. After the construction of the city Caliph 'Umar Farooq رض appointed 'Utbah bin Ghazwân رض governor of Basra.

'Utbah bin Ghazwân رض was not only a successful General but also a simple and humble man who was known as a reformer as well. He realised that the Muslims who had settled in Basra had begun to care too deeply for things of this world; this love of luxuries could make person neglect the life of the spirit and of the Hereafter. He saw that the people who did not know even the word rice had developed a taste for Iranian delicacies. When he realised that the spiritual values of Islam were being endangered by the life of this world he gathered the people in the mosque and addressed them thus:

"O People! The life of this world is going to end. You will be transferred from here to a house, which will be yours forever. You will take with you only your good deeds. People, I have had the distinction of being among the first to accept Islam. At that time we used to eat the leaves of trees to survive and sometimes our mouths used to be full of sores and wounds because of this. Our poverty was such that often we had difficulty finding clothes to cover our bodies. One day I found a sheet, which I cut up into two. One I used to cover myself and the other I gave to Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs to use as a loin cloth. Today all of us are governors of some province or the other. I ask for Allâh protection from the condition where I may think myself to be very great now, but in the sight of Allâh I shall be considered very low."

Then he appointed one among those present as his deputy and saying goodbye to them left for Al-Madinah. When he went to the presence of Caliph 'Umar Farooq رض he handed in his resignation. But Caliph 'Umar Farooq رض refused to accept it and ordered him to return to Basra and resume the responsibilities of his position. He told him that

he had placed him in the pre-eminent position of the caliphate and wanted to escape himself. He insisted that he should help him. He obeyed the command of Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ very reluctantly and getting on to his camel he rode back to Basra. On the way out of Al-Madinah he kept on praying earnestly, "O Allâh please don't take me back! O Allâh please don't take me back!"

Allâh ﷺ accepted his supplications and he had just gone a little distance from of Al-Madinah, when his camel stumbled. 'Utbah bin Ghazwâن ﷺ fell died instantly and went on to meet his Creature.

"Come back to your Lord - well-pleased (yourself) and well pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

‘Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Doubtless this was the way to fight a battle. Whoever wishes to take part in a battle should adopt the strategy of ‘Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ.”

‘Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ

All the Quraish set off for Mountain Uhud to fight against the Prophet ﷺ. Adults and children, young and old, rich and poor - everyone was there. Because of their complete rout at the Battle of Badr, their hearts were filled with fury and rage against the Muslims. They were eager to avenge the death of their near and dear ones, and the fire of revenge burnt bright as they wanted desperately to erase the Muslims from the face of the earth. They had taken their women along with them so that they could inspire the men and remind the youth of the great deeds of their forefathers and inspire them to perform heroic feats and not retreat. Among these women was the wife of Abu Sufyân, Hind bin ‘Utbah and Reetah the wife of ‘Amr bin ‘Aas. The wife of Talah, Salafah bint Sa’d had joined them with her three sons Musâffâ’, Jalas and Kalab. Besides these there were many others who accompanied the army.

When fierce fighting broke out between the two armies in the Battle of Uhud, then Hind and the other women went and stood behind the line of the warriors; beating their drums they started to sing:

If you advance we will embrace you, and prop up pillows for you.

If you turn your backs and flee, we will spurn you. (poetry)

The emotional anthems inspired emotions of tribal pride and worked like magic on their husbands.

Then the battle seemed to cool down and the Quraish dominated over the Muslims. The women, intoxicated with the joy of victory, came out on the battlefield and started to dance and desecrate the dead bodies of the *Mujâhideen*. In the passionate desire for revenge, they slit up

their bellies, gouged out their eyes and cut off their noses and ears. One woman, her appetite for revenge for the men of her family not satisfied with all this, strung the noses and ears she had cut off on a piece of string and wore it as a necklace! On another string she shaped an anklet and put it on her feet and started dancing joyfully amidst the dead bodies.

But Salafah bint Sa'd was very different from her friends. She was anxiously expecting her family - her husband and three sons - to turn up any moment; once she saw them she would also join the dancers in the celebrations of victory, she thought. Finally she got tired, her long wait seemed wasted and she started looking for the faces of her dear ones among the dead. She finally found her husband's dead body soaked in blood. She turned around like an enraged tigress and started looking swiftly in every corner of the battlefield for her three sons. Some time later she found the three bodies scattered in the field under Mountain Uhud. Musâffa' and Kalab were dead and her third son, Jalas was breathing his last.

Stricken with grief she sat down beside him, took his head on her lap and started cleaning up his face and his forehead. She was trying her utmost to save his life; she was heartbroken but could not shed a tear. In deep sorrow she asked her son:

"My dear son, who has given you these grievous wounds?"

He wanted to reply, but could not as he was panting for life. Again and again she repeated her question. Finally, he gasped out:

"My father, brothers and I all killed by 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ."

Hearing this Salafah started to scream and swore by the false gods 'Uzza and Lât that her rage could not die down until she had taken revenge on him, and drank wine from his skull.

Then she proclaimed that she would give any amount of wealth desired, to the person, who brought him alive or brought his head. The news of this announcement of hers spread like wildfire among the Quraish. All the young men started to wish that this wealth should be

theirs and they should be the lucky ones to succeed in killing 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ.

The Muslims returned to Al-Madinah after the Battle of Uhud and started discussing its outcome amongst them. They offered supplications to Allâh for the *Mujâhideen* and spoke respectfully of their courage and daring. They were surprised that 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ had killed four members of the same family.

One of them said:

"Why should you be surprised? Don't you remember that before the Battle of Badr the Prophet ﷺ had asked what strategy we would adopt in the battle."

'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ had stood up with his bow in his hand and replied:

"When the enemy is a hundred yards away we will use our bows and arrows; when the enemy comes closer we will fight with our spears; when the spears break we will have a hand to hand combat with our swords."

When the Prophet ﷺ heard this he said:

"Doubtless this was the way to fight a battle. Whoever wishes to take part in a battle should adopt the strategy of 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ."

Soon after the Battle of Uhud the Prophet ﷺ sent six of his Companions on a special mission with 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ at its head.

These Companions were just a short distance from Makkah when a group of the Banu Hatheel pursued them and ambushed them. 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ and his companions drew their swords out of their scabbards and got ready to fight them. Seeing this the Banu Hatheel said:

"Today you cannot fight with us. By god we do not intend to harm you; if you lay down your weapons we swear with Allâh as witness that we will not do anything to you."

The Companions looked at each other on hearing this, as if to consult each other. 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ looked at his companions and said:

"I will not lay down my weapons before the *Mushrikeen*."

Then he remembered the announcement of the reward by Salafah bint Sa'd and he prayed to Allâh.

"O Allâh! I protect and defend your faith and, have Mercy on me and protect my flesh and my bones; please do not allow them to fall into the hands of the enemy."

After this supplication he attacked the enemy, with two of his companions joining in with him. They fought bravely and were martyred one by one. The other three surrendered; sure enough the *Mushrkeen* broke their promise and tied up these men who had surrendered. One of them committed suicide and the other two were sent to Makkah. These two were killed in revenge.

At first the Banu Hatheel were not even aware that 'Âsim bin Thâbit رض was among those martyred. When they came to know they were elated because they would get the reward which Salafah bint Sa'd had offered for 'Âsim bin Thâbit رض, either alive or for his skull.

A few hours after the martyrdom of 'Asim رض, the Quraish learnt of the whereabouts of his body which was lying in the area inhabited by the Banu Hatheel, near Makkah. Their leaders sent a messenger to them asking for the head of 'Âsim bin Thâbit رض, so that Salafah bint Sa'd could drink wine from it and cool her temper and slake her thirst for revenge.

The Quraish gave a lot of money to their messenger so that he could give gifts and cash to the Banu Hatheel and succeed in getting the head of 'Asim رض.

When some of the men of the Banu Hatheel went near his pure body to cut off the head they found a whole lot of bees, wasps and hornets surrounding his body and his head. As they neared the body the bees and wasps attacked them, so that they feared for their very lives. They finally gave up after many attempts, saying to each other.

"Let us wait for the night; in the darkness these dangerous insects will leave the body and only then can we succeed in our aim."

They went and sat some distance away to wait for nightfall and success in their mission. The sun had not yet set when suddenly dark dense clouds appeared on the sky. The very air seemed to tremble with the thunder. The elders said such heavy rain had never been seen before.

Soon the streets and roads took on the appearance of streams. The low-lying areas were filled, and there was water everywhere as in a flood. It rained heavily the whole night and the Banu Hatheel went back to their homes. Next morning people of the Banu Hatheel came out to get the head of 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ. They went towards the field, but the body was not there. The flood had washed it away to some unknown place. They searched high and low, but it was nowhere to be found.

The truth was that Allâh in His Divine Mercy had answered the supplications of 'Âsim bin Thâbit ﷺ and protected his body. He did not allow his head that was worthy of reverence and respect to fall into the hands of his enemies to be used for such a devilish and sinful act as the drinking of wine. Allâh did not allow the *Mushrikeen* to triumph over the *Mu'mineen* or true believers; this is how he protects his chosen subjects. The *kuffar* may plan anything against the *Mo'min*, but the Divine Plan overcomes all other plans.

"Come back to your Lord – well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89: 28)

Zaid bin Hârithah

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“By Allâh! Zaid bin Hârithah  was worthy of the position of leadership, and was dearer to me than all others.”

Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ

Sa'da bint Thu'labah traveled to meet her family with her son, Zaid bin Hârithah. She had just reached the house of a relative on a visit when suddenly bandits of the Banu Qais raided the place and began to loot and plunder. They took away everything they had, stole all their cattle and kidnapped the children. Among these children was Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ. At the time he was just eight years old. They took him to the market at 'Akkâdh and sold him to a wealthy chieftain, Hakeem bin Hazâm Khawaled, for four hundred dirhams. Hakeem had bought some other slaves as well and took them to Makkah along with him. When Umm-ul-Mo'mineen Khadijah رضي الله عنها heard of his arrival she went to meet him as he happened to be her nephew.

Hakeem bin Hazâm Khawaled told her that he had bought a large number of slaves at the 'Akkâdh market and said he would be happy to present her with any slave she picked for herself. When Umm-ul-Mo'mineen Khadijah رضي الله عنها looked at the slaves something about the intelligent and noble appearance of Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ caught her attention and she chose him.

Some time later Umm-ul-Mo'mineen Khadijah رضي الله عنها married the Prophet ﷺ. On this occasion she wished to give a gift to her husband, and she thought Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ would be the best possible present she could give him. Thus this slave was fortunate enough to be brought up under the tutelage and guidance of the Prophet ﷺ, who was an exemplary role model and whose character and behaviour influenced him.

Meanwhile the parents of Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ were being tormented

by grief. His mother was crying continuously and her heart yearned for her favourite lost son. She was tortured by the uncertainty - was her beloved son alive, and should she wait for him to appear by some miracle? Or was he dead, and should she give up all hopes of ever meeting him again? His father meanwhile, had looked for him in every conceivable place. Had the earth swallowed him or had the heavens zoomed him up?

Sometimes in desperate grief he would start reciting verses which would affect the listeners so as to make them weep. Here are some examples :

- I shed tears for my darling

Not knowing what he has undergone

Is he alive and should I wait for him?

Or have the cruel hands of death taken him?

- By god, I do not know my son

What has happened to you

Has the soft earth swallowed you

Or has the tall hard mountain hidden you?

- The rising sun reminds me of my darling

And it again revives memories when it sets in the evening.

- I wander everywhere on the earth, and search for you

Mounted on my camel; I will never tire of this wandering.

- My son my search will continue till I die

Eventually all have to die, though false hopes may keep you alive.

One year on the occasion of Hajj some members of the family of Zaid bin Hârithah رض came to Makkah; they were going around the Ka'bah when one of them saw Zaid bin Hârithah رض. They recognised him and he too recognised them. They exchanged news about each other's welfare. When they returned home after performing Hajj, they informed his father that his son was alive and well in Makkah. They told him that they had seen him themselves, and had spoken to him.



As soon as Hârithah heard this good news he got his camel ready, took some cash because he thought he may need to buy back his son, and asked his brother Ka'b to accompany him. Both of them travelled towards Makkah as fast as they could. As soon as they reached Makkah, they went into the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and said,

"You are a neighbour of the House of Allâh and are magnanimous. You feed the poor and assist the helpless. We have come into your presence for our son and for this purpose we have brought a lot of money. For God's sake have mercy on us; we will be happy to pay you any price you ask for him."

When the Prophet ﷺ heard this he asked,

"Who is the person whose release you are demanding?"

They answered, "Your slave, Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ."

He asked

"Shall I show you a method that will be better than paying a price for him?"

Both of them asked in surprised tones, "What is this method?"

"I will call him here in front you. If he wishes to go with you then he is free to do so. You can take him gladly. I will not take any compensation for him. But on the other hand if he prefers to stay with me then I will not force him to go with you."

Both the brothers were very happy on hearing this, and said,

"Your decision is very just and we accept it."

The Prophet ﷺ sent for Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ and asked him,

"Who are these two men?"

He answered,

"This is my father Hârithah bin Sharjeel, and this is my uncle Ka'b."

The Prophet ﷺ told him that he had the freedom to either go with them or continue to stay with him.

Without a moment's hesitation he replied:

"I will stay with you." When his father heard this he said, "This is very sad! Would you rather be a slave than stay with your parents?"

Zaid bin Hârithah رض answered:

"Father, I am deeply moved by the praiseworthy qualities of the character of the Prophet ﷺ, and by the way he treats me with love and affection. I just cannot leave him and live anywhere else."



When the Prophet ﷺ realised how deeply Zaid bin Hârithah رض loved him and respected him, he was very happy. He rose up quickly and holding his hand took him to Ka'bah or the House of Allâh he declared loud and clear in front of the chieftains of the Quraish,

"O family of the Quraish, be witness that this is my son and heir, and I am his heir."

The father and uncle of Zaid bin Hârithah رض were surprised to hear this announcement and happy too. They went home pleased with the outcome. From that day on Zaid bin Hârithah رض came to be called Zaid bin Muhammad, until such time as the Verses of the Noble Qur'ân were revealed in where Allâh Almighty commanded in Surah Al-Ahzâb:

"Call them after their fathers: that is more just in the sight of Allâh." (33:5)

Then once again he began to be called, Zaid bin Hârithah رض.



When Zaid bin Hârithah رض gave preference to the Prophet ﷺ over his parents no one knew what wealth was in store for him. He did not even know to what position Muhammad ﷺ was to be elevated. No one knew that one day Muhammad ﷺ would be the Guide for the whole world, and a Divine Order would be established on the soil of Saudi Arabia, which would then become the cradle of Justice, Peace and

Tranquillity. Neither did Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ know that he would have the honour of being the first brick in the grand edifice of Islam. Doubtless this is due to the beneficence of Allâh. He bestows on whom He Pleases.

Only a few years had passed after Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ had opted to stay with the Prophet ﷺ rather than with his parents, when Allâh nominated the latter to the position of His Divine Messenger. He was to preach the Doctrine of the Truth and Unity or Oneness of Allâh. Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ was the extremely fortunate man who first pledged allegiance to Islam personally to the Prophet ﷺ, believing in him. He had this unique honour and was the confidant of the Prophet ﷺ and one of the first Commanders-in-Chief of the army of Islam. He also had the honour of being the vicegerent of the Prophet ﷺ on an occasion when he had gone out of Al-Madinah to fight in a war.

Just as Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ had shown a great love for the Prophet ﷺ overriding all other bonds, so also the Prophet ﷺ considered him a son and truly a member of his family. Whenever Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ left on a mission he would pray earnestly for his success and be very happy to see him return.

Umm-ul-Mo'mineen 'Â'ishah (رضي الله عنها) describes a scene depicting how the Prophet ﷺ greeted Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ on his return from one such mission. "she says:

"When Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ returned to Al-Madinah after a journey, the Prophet ﷺ happened to be in my house. When he knocked on the door, the Prophet ﷺ quickly got up to answer. He found that it was Zaid ﷺ at the door; he was overjoyed and hugged him warmly, kissed his forehead. By Allâh! I had never seen him so excited in welcoming any other Companion."

This is why Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ was known among the Muslims as 'Beloved of the Messenger of Allâh' and the son of Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ was known among the Companions as 'Son of Beloved of the Messenger of Allâh'.

In the year 8th Hijrah, Allâh saw it fit to make His Prophet suffer the loss of a very loyal and beloved Companion. The Prophet ﷺ had sent Hâarith bin 'Umair ﷺ with a letter for the Shah of Basrah, inviting him to accept Islam. When he reached a place called Motah on the border of Jordan, Amir Ghassân Sharjeel bin 'Amr confronted him, and then captured him and killed him. The Prophet ﷺ heard this terrible news with anguish and grief. He appointed Zaid bin Hâarithah ﷺ Commander-in-Chief and sent an army of three thousand soldiers to Motah. He said if Zaid bin Hâarithah ﷺ was martyred, then Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ should take over the Command. In case he too was martyred, 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ should become the Commander. And in case he too was martyred, the *Mujâhideen* should choose whoever they considered the best to lead them.

The army of Islam set out reciting the Name of Allâh and reached the eastern city of Ma'an in Jordan. The Emperor of Rome came to the battlefield with a hundred thousand men; another hundred thousand 'mushrikeen' of Arabia joined up with him. This huge army came forward arrogantly and confronted the Muslims.

The Muslims spent two nights at Ma'an consulting and planning what military strategy should be adopted under the circumstances. One *Mujâhid* suggested that they should write to the Prophet ﷺ informing him about the huge numbers of the opposing army, and wait for his orders.

Another said, "By Allâh we do not fight depending on our numbers, neither do we fight depending on our military strength. We are armed only for the defence and protection of our True Faith. My companions! Remember the purpose for which we set out towards the battlefield of *Jihâd*. Allâh has guaranteed one of two prizes for you; either you will be blessed with victory or you will be blessed with martyrdom."

At Motah the two opposing forces came face to face. There were only three thousand soldiers in the army of Muslims and there were two hundred thousand soldiers in the enemy army. The *Mujâhideen* fought so courageously in the battle that the enemy panicked and was overcome.

For the protection of the standard of Islam given to them by the Prophet ﷺ, the Commander-in-Chief, Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ, performed extraordinary exploits, rarely matched in the annals of military history. At last the spears of the enemy pierced him in so many spots that he succumbed to his injuries. Then the flag was taken by Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. He also protected it with his sword and his life, before being martyred. After him 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ stepped forward and took up the flag and fought so bravely that the onlookers were stunned. Finally he too was martyred. After him the army chose Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to lead them. He had only recently accepted Islam, but it was only because of his religious fervour and military experience and expertise, that the Muslim army won a comprehensive victory.

The day the Prophet ﷺ received the news of the martyrdom of three Commanders-in-Chief of the army of Islam was a very sad day for him; no one had ever seen him so grief-stricken before. Immediately he went to the homes of the three Commanders-in-Chief to condole with the families. When he went to the house of Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ, his youngest daughter رضي الله عنها hugged him and wept. The eyes of the Prophet ﷺ also filled with tears. Seeing this Sa'd bin 'Ubâdah ﷺ asked him, "O Prophet of Allâh are you also weeping?"

He replied, "These are the tears of a beloved for a beloved."

In the Name of Allâh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

"Come back to your Lord - well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)." (89: 28)

Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ﷺ

Prophet ﷺ supplicate for Jareer bin 'Abdullah:
“O Allâh ﷺ please grant Jareer bin 'Abdullâh
the ability to sit firmly on his horse, and
make him a righteous leader who will guide
others to the straight path.”

Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ﷺ

Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ﷺ was a popular leader of the tribe of Bajeelah. He was a tall handsome and attractive man, and had a radiant face. This was his physical appearance; but by nature he was no less pleasing. He was a courteous, polite man with a superb command of the language and was soft-spoken yet eloquent. Considering all these wonderful traits of character, 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه had given him the title of 'A second Yusuf.'

The Prophet ﷺ, in his Friday sermon, spoke of him in such a charming manner that everyone started to look at him enviously. This was at the time that he arrived at Al-Madinah and entered the mosque of the Prophet ﷺ to pledge allegiance to Islam.

Imam Ahmed in his *Masnâd* describes the incident in the words of Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ﷺ himself. He narrates:

On a Friday in the month of Ramadhân in 10th Hijrah, I went to Al-Madinah to gain the blessing of Allâh by converting to Islam. With me were some good and well-dressed people of my tribe. When we reached the mosque of the Prophet ﷺ we tethered our horses to the trees outside. At the time the Friday sermon was being delivered by the Prophet ﷺ himself. We respectfully went and sat in the last rows. The congregation was giving us sidelong glances. One of my companions told me that we had just been mentioned in a very appreciative and charming manner by the Prophet ﷺ. He had said:

"My trusted friends! A prince of Yemen will soon come in your midst, he will have an impressive regal look and dignity about him."

My happiness knew no bounds when I heard these highly complimentary words used by the Prophet ﷺ for me. Doubtless this was a great honour coming as it did from the Prophet ﷺ himself. My heart seemed to sing and my face turned pink with pleasure and for the first time in my life I seemed to have found real happiness and peace. After the Friday prayers we presented ourselves before the Prophet ﷺ. He expressed his pleasure at seeing us so well dressed and spreading out his cloak for me asked me to be seated. He said,

“When a person from another tribe, deserving of respect comes to visit you, you must treat him with deference.”

Once my friends and I had settled down, he asked me affectionately, ‘How did you happen to come? We answered respectfully.

“O Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, we have come into your presence to pledge allegiance to Islam. We will be very fortunate indeed if we are blessed with the bounty of Islam.”

On hearing our request his face lit up. He told me:

“Come and swear the oath of allegiance to me and promise with all your heart and soul that there is no other worthy of worship but the One True Allâh. And also acknowledge that I am the true Prophet sent by Allâh. Besides this, you will have to offer the obligatory prayers regularly; paying ‘Zakât’ or the poor dues is a must and you must fast during the month of Ramadhân. If you can afford it you have to perform the ‘Hajj’. You must wish well for all Muslims and behave sympathetically towards them. Remember the Allâh has no Mercy on him who has no mercy on others. Co-operate with the person who has been appointed your leader or Amir, and obey him even if he is from a weaker tribe.”

Since Jareer bin ‘Abdullâh bin Jâbir رضي الله عنه was the leader of the Yemeni delegation he spoke on their behalf and said:

“O Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, we sincerely promise to respect all these commands of Islam.”

Saying this he moved forward and placed his palm in the palm of the

Prophet ﷺ, and gained the supreme blessing and gift of Islam. Thus the members of the delegation were elevated to the most excellent position among human beings, that of Muslims.

After becoming a Muslim, the first great achievement of Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir was the destruction of Zulkhalsah. The Yemenis considered Zulkhalsah to be a very holy temple and people came here to ask for the fulfilment of their desires. In fact it was well-known as the 'Ka'bah of Yemen'. People would come from great distances and the worship of the idol installed there was considered a religious duty.

Addressing Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"O Jareer will you not destroy the largest temple of Yemen to please me?"

He replied,

"O Prophet of Allâh, what greater honour could there be for me than that you have selected me to accomplish this great mission. I am ever ready to obey you and very soon you will hear some good news in connection with this matter. But I have a request; I am not able to sit firmly on horseback due to some weakness inherent in me. So when riding I have to face embarrassment at times. Please offer supplications to Allâh to make me stronger."

So the Prophet ﷺ prayed thus:

"O Allâh please grant Jareer bin 'Abdullâh the ability to sit firmly on horseback and make him a righteous and true guide for his people."

These auspicious words uttered by the Prophet ﷺ changed the life of Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir completely. From that day on he became an ace rider and became famous as a great officer of the cavalry.

Jareer bin 'Abdullâh left for Yemen with the blessings and best wishes of the Prophet ﷺ, at the head of a troop of a hundred and fifty soldiers. As soon as they reached there they attacked the temple and razed it to the ground in no time.

He sent Abu Artah to Al-Madinah to convey the good news to the Prophet ﷺ. When this news reached the Prophet ﷺ, his face lit up with joy, and he prayed for the prosperity and welfare of all the troops.

While Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ؓ was still in Yemen, the Prophet ﷺ passed away. When Jareer ؓ heard this tragic news, he was grief-stricken and could not believe his ears. His wish had been to go and meet the Prophet ﷺ in person, but this was not to be. He went to Al-Madinah to meet with the new Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and pledged loyalty to him and requested that he be acknowledged as the chieftain of the Bajeelah tribe, and allowed to play a prominent part in the battlefield of *Jihâd*. Since Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ was busy suppressing the seditious revolts which were threatening the very existence of the Islamic state, he did not pay much attention to his request. Getting no response to his request, Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ؓ quietly returned to Yemen, and spent the duration of the Siddiqi Caliphate in his country. He did not take part in any of the important wars being fought against the rebels and the apostates. The whole of this very critical and tempestuous period he spent in complete retirement.

During the caliphate of 'Umar Farooq ؓ the famous battle of Jasr was fought in Iraq. The Muslims had to face defeat there. In the light of the prevailing circumstances, 'Umar Farooq ؓ called a meeting of all the tribes of Arabia, and appointing their chieftains as Generals, he ordered them to set out for Iraq.

Thus Jareer ؓ in his capacity as chieftain of his tribe also went to Iraq. On the way he met up with that great General of Islam, Mathna bin Hârithah ؓ. He was at the time fighting against the Iranian army. The Iranian army and the *Mujâhideen* finally confronted each other at Boyab. The Muslim army attacked the Iranians from all directions and Jareer ؓ, was given charge of the right wing. The enemy fought with great determination; and because of some strategic moves by the Iranians the *Mujâhideen* faced difficulties. They scattered and split into smaller groups; the consequent weakening of the forces became apparent; Mathna bin Hârithah ؓ in order to rouse the flagging spirits of his men, shouted out a fresh challenge to the enemy. Hearing his thunderous voice their spirit of *Jihâd* was revived and they became alert. Jareer bin 'Abdullâh ؓ, displaying great courage and daring,

commanded his men to attack the enemy. Because of the encouragement and fearlessness of these two generals, the *Mujâhideen*, once again risking their lives, launched a strong attack against the enemy. This was the critical point of time in the battle; the famous Iranian general., Mehran was killed, and his men lost courage and fled. Thus the army of Islam gained a decisive victory.

The role played by Jareer bin 'Abdullâh was instrumental in demoralising the enemy, and the Muslim *Mujâhideen* were amazed by his skill with the sword and his audacious courage.

After the decisive victory at Qâdissiyah the great general, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs, conquered all the minor chieftains and leaders of the surrounding areas and reorganised the Muslim army and advanced towards Madyan, the capital of Iran. En route they had to cross the River Dajlah; realising the imminence of the danger, the Iranians destroyed the bridge on the river to prevent the *Mujâhideen* from crossing it easily. The daring general Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs, stepped into the deep waters of the River Dajlah astride his horse and all the men followed. They were chatting and joking with each other as if they were out on a picnic on dry land. The Iranians were shocked to see this; they had never expected that the Muslim army would take the destruction of the bridge so lightly and adopt this confident and bold alternative. Their horses were led fearlessly into the waters!

When the Muslim army had crossed the river and almost reached the shore, the Iranians fled panic stricken, screaming;

"Run the jinns are coming! Run for your life, the devils are coming!"

Thus, without any opposition, Madyan was captured. The Shah of Iran, Yazdagar, fled with his family. There were vast treasures in this capital city of Madyan which fell into the hands of the hands of the Muslims. After this all the major cities of Iran such as Jalula', Nahâwind, Khozastan, Tibristan, Khoozistan, Hamdân, Rai, Azerbaijân, Armenia, Fâris, Karman, Seestan etc were conquered.

Shah Yazdagar fled in such a cowardly and dishonourable manner that he is remembered even to this day with scorn and derision.

After the conquest of Damascus in Syria, the Islamic flag was soon flying high in Jordan and Hamas as well. The army of Islam next moved on to the banks of the River Yarmook. The platoons of the Muslim army had gathered here from all directions according to a certain set plan. The Romans were alerted by this movement of troops, and moving to the opposite banks of the river, encamped there to challenge the Muslim army. Their considered opinion was that this was the most secure spot from the military point of view. On one side there were mountains and on the other was the River Yarmook. The Christian army consisted of two hundred and forty thousand soldiers. The *Mujâhidîn* entrenched themselves opposite the Roman army. As a result the Roman army was now encircled from all sides. On one side was the river, behind them were the mountains and encamped right opposite them was the Muslim army. In the event of a defeat all routes of escape were cut off. Thus the very objectives they had in mind when selecting this site were defeated.

As soon he reached Yarmook, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ held a meeting with the four other great Generals - Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ, 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ, Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ and Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ﷺ. He said:

"Since the Romans are planning to launch a very powerful attack with their huge numbers; the only way to counter-attack them is to unite all the armies. My suggestion is that the armies should be united under one Commander-in-Chief. instead of fighting separately under the different generals."

The generals approved of the suggestion unanimously, and by common consent Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was chosen to be Commander-in-Chief.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, acknowledged world-wide today as one of the greatest generals in world history, devised his strategy of war. He divided the army into thirty-eight platoons. Of these eighteen were placed in the centre under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ; ten were put under Sharjeel bin Hasanah ﷺ and formed the right wing of the army. Ten were under the command of Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ﷺ and formed the left wing.

The Romans too organised their ranks very well. In spite of this the Christian cavalry could not face the attack of the *Mujâhideen* and fled from the battlefield defeated. But, there was no way of escape either as they were encircled from all sides. Behind them were the mountains, on one side was the river and on the other were the *Mujâhideen*. Many Romans were killed and about a hundred thousand were drowned in the river.

Yarmook was of great significance in the conquest of Syria. After this decisive victory the backbone of the Roman resistance was broken. They could not resist the onslaught of the Muslims at any other place after this defeat. The terrible destruction left such a powerful effect on Herqal that he left Syria saying:

"O earth of Syria, greetings to you; you have proved to be very advantageous for the enemy!"

He left Syria for good and took up permanent residence in Rome. A few months later the whole of Syria came under the control of the Muslims. In this battle Jareer bin 'Abdullâh رض had the distinction of etching his saga of courage and daring on the pages of Islamic history in golden letters. His effective control of the members of his tribe brought to the fore his exceptional qualities of leadership. This youth, brought up in the lap of luxury proved himself to be an excellent general. His expert advice in the planning of military strategy contributed greatly to the success at Yarmook. In recognition of his military and organisational skills he was appointed to a suitable post by the Caliph.

During the caliphate of 'Uthmân رض he was appointed Governor of Hamdân, and trusted with important and responsible positions during many wars. Jalula' was of great strategic importance from the military point of view. After it had been conquered by the Muslims Jareer bin 'Abdullâh رض was given the responsibility of protecting and administering it. Four thousand *Mujâhideen* were placed under his command to help him. Near Jalula' was Halwân, another central and important town. The general of the Muslim army, Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رض, sent three thousand *Mujâhideen* as reinforcements for Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir رض, so that he could use all the power at his command to bring Halwân as well under the control of the Islamic state.

With seven thousand combined forces under his command, Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ﷺ set out for Halwân. The enemy was so intimidated by the majesty and power of the army of Islam, that they fled leaving the city deserted. So the *Mujâhideen* took over the city without any resistance. After this with the joint efforts of Abu Musâ Ash'ari, Nu'man bin Maqrân and Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir رضي الله عنه, the important Iranian towns of Ahwâz and Tastar were brought under the control of the Islamic state.

When Tastar came under the total control of the *Mujâhideen*, Yazdagard prepared his famous general Mardan Shah for combat and placed a huge army under his command.

When 'Umar Farooq ﷺ heard that the Iranians had made elaborate preparations and a huge army had been mobilised to face the Muslims, he was worried. Finally, after a great deal of thought, he deputised 'Ali ﷺ to take charge of the Caliphate and himself set out at the head of the Muslim forces. But because of the timely intervention and advice of 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf ﷺ, he gave up this idea and placed the army under the command of the experienced general Nu'mân bin Maqrân ﷺ and sent him to face the Iranians. Since this was going to be a difficult encounter he sent Jareer ﷺ to help him. By the Grace of Allâh and the united efforts of these two great generals the Muslims triumphed.

During the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ Jareer ﷺ was nominated to the post of Governor of Hamdân.

When 'Ali ﷺ became Caliph, he sent Jareer bin 'Abdullâh bin Jâbir ﷺ to Damascus as a representative of the Caliphate at Al-Madinah. He was to negotiate with Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ and persuade him to swear allegiance to him. But the talks did not produce any results; after discussions with his comrades, Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ refused to accept 'Ali ﷺ as the new Caliph. Jareer ﷺ, while informing 'Ali ﷺ of the refusal of Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ to accept him, pointed out to him that he had made arrangements for military defence as well. Some of the comrades expressed displeasure at this. When Jareer bin 'Abdullah ﷺ saw this attitude, he was deeply upset and grieved. He thought it best not to get involved and moved to Kufah with his family. He spent the rest of his life in quiet retirement at Qarqeesiya and did not participate in the battles of Jamal and Safain.

In 54th Hijrah he passed away at his place of residence and went to Paradise, at peace with himself. A hundred Ahâdith are connected with him. Of these eight are unanimously agreed upon by eminent scholars.

The outward beauty and inner beauty of character of Jareer  were in complete harmony and accord. When his hair turned gray he took to dying it with henna, and looked even more impressive. All who saw him envied him his imposing personality.

“Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!” (89:28)

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ

Once Jibreel ﷺ said to the Prophet ﷺ

“After he was martyred Allâh ﷺ gave him two wings in the place of his arms which had been cut off; he can fly wherever he pleases in the company of angels.”

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib

He was the first cousin of the Prophet ﷺ and the brother of 'Ali ﷺ. He was ten years older than him. He was always there to help the poor, the orphans and those in need. He was a distinguished and true Muslim, who was the very image of generosity and munificence. He also had the distinction of migrating twice, once to Ethiopia and once to Al-Madinah. When the Muslims migrated to Ethiopia, the Prophet ﷺ appointed him leader of the caravan.

He was the *Mujâhid* who enjoyed flying with the angels in Paradise with the two wings he was given by Allâh ﷺ in the place of the arms he had lost in *Jihâd*.

His recitation of the Noble Qur'ân was so melodious that it stirred the souls of those who heard him. He was a popular orator whose eloquence and mastery over the Arabic language and his daring rebuttals and prompt ripostes in debate stunned even as skilled and famous a politician as 'Amr bin 'Aas.

The Prophet ﷺ told Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ that he resembled him in appearance and character, and he was overjoyed to hear this. The Prophet ﷺ had also given him the titles of 'Winged Being', 'Two-Wings', and 'Father of the Poor.' He had also elevated his status by kissing his forehead. When the Prophet ﷺ heard of his martyrdom, he was grieved and tears rolled down his cheeks. It was then that Jibreel ﷺ gave the news to the Prophet ﷺ of the joyful flights of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ with the angels in Paradise. When the nightingale of the court of the Prophet ﷺ, Hassân bin Thâbit ﷺ, heard of his martyrdom he expressed his love for the family of the Prophet ﷺ by extemporaneously reciting a poem in his honour.

When Muhammad ﷺ was blessed with the title of Prophet and Messenger by Allâh ﷺ, he extended a sincere invitation to his near and dear ones to accept the True Faith. His exemplary character and his truthfulness and integrity and humility moved his companions and they began to enter into the fold of Islam. Thirty one people accepted Islam before Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. The first person to respond to the invitation of the Prophet was his wife, Khadijah رضي الله عنها. After her the following fortunate Companions entered Islam and became the Pillars of Greatness and the Trustees of Truth:

- Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه
- 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib رضي الله عنه
- Zaid bin Hârithah رضي الله عنه
- 'Uthmân bin 'Affân رضي الله عنه
- Zubair bin Awâm رضي الله عنه
- 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf رضي الله عنه
- Sa'd bin Abi Waqâs رضي الله عنه
- Talhah bin 'Ubaidullâh رضي الله عنه
- Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه
- Abu Salamah رضي الله عنه
- Arqam bin Abi Arqam رضي الله عنه
- 'Uthmân bin Madh'oon bin Habib رضي الله عنه
- Qadâmah bin Madh'oon رضي الله عنه
- 'Abdullâh bin Madh'oon رضي الله عنه
- 'Ubaidah bin Hârith رضي الله عنه
- Sa'eed bin Zaid رضي الله عنه
- Fatimah bint Khattâb رضي الله عنها
- Asmâ' bint Abi Bakr رضي الله عنها
- Khabab bin Aratt رضي الله عنه

- 'Umair bin Abi Waqâs ﷺ
- 'Abdullâh bin Mas'ood ﷺ
- Mas'ood Qâri ﷺ
- Saleet bin 'Amr ﷺ
- 'Ayâsh bin Abi Rabee'ah ﷺ
- Asmâ' bint Salâmah رضي الله عنها
- Khanees bin Hathâfah ﷺ
- 'Âmer bin Rabee'ah ﷺ
- 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ
- Abu Ahmad bin Jahash ﷺ

And after them Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ entered the fold of Islam. He was distinguished in three ways. He was a member of the Prophet's family. He was a member of that distinguished band of people who accepted Islam first. And he sacrificed his life for Allâh ﷺ. There is a tradition attributed to 'Abdullâh bin Ja'far, Abu Musâ Ash'ari ﷺ and 'Amr bin 'Aas that the Prophet ﷺ used to call Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ 'Abu Al-Masâkeen', (Father of the Poor).

There were four brothers in the family and there was a difference of ten years between each of them. Tâlib bin Abi Tâlib was the eldest. The next was 'Aqeel, then there was Ja'far ﷺ. And the youngest was 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. Abu Huraira ﷺ quotes the Prophet ﷺ as saying that he saw Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ flying in Paradise with the angels. He also says:

"Whenever we felt very hungry Ja'far ﷺ would take us home and serve us anything that he happened to have at home. He delighted in feeding the poor and the destitute and serving them."

'Ali bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ says that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Ja'far ﷺ was a member of his family and resembled him in appearance and character."

'Abdullâh bin Mas'ood ﷺ and *Umm-ul-Mo'mineen* Umm Salâmah رضي الله عنها narrate that the second caravan migrating to Ethiopia consisted of eighty three people. Among these oppressed emigrants were such

notable Companions as Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رضي الله عنه, Abu Musâ Ash'ari رضي الله عنه, 'Abdullâh bin Arfah رضي الله عنه and 'Uthmân bin Madh'oon bin Habib رضي الله عنه

Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها writes that when the Quraish came to know that this band of migrants were leading peaceful and serene lives in Ethiopia, they were furious. Plotting to inflame the Ethiopian emperor Najâshi against these *Muhâjireen* and have them thrown out, they sent their craftiest statesman, 'Amr bin 'Aas and 'Abdullâh bin Abi Rabee'ah with plenty of expensive gifts to the court of Emperor Najâshi. They were also instructed to meet the courtiers, ministers, noblemen and religious leaders, and give them gifts in order to bring them around to their point of view. These two men did as they had been instructed. When they felt confident that the preliminaries had been smoothed out and well prepared, and the important personages of the kingdom would help them, they decided to put in an appearance at the court.

One fine day feeling very smug and sure that their objective was well within reach, they went to meet Emperor Najâshi. Najâshi was seated on his throne in full regal splendour and all the nobles were assembled in the court. 'Amr bin 'Aas and 'Abdullâh bin Abi Rabee'ah wished him by prostrating on the floor in front of him. Pleased with them he asked them to sit on either side of him. Very humbly they said:

"Your Highness our people have sent these gifts for you, kindly honour us by accepting them."

"Emperor Najâshi nodded and the gifts were accepted. Taking this to be an opportune moment, they again bowed low and said, "We have great regard for you; in fact because of our deep love for you and your country, we are taking the liberty of warning you that a few trouble makers from our country have taken refuge in your peaceful land. They have turned traitors to the religion of their forefathers and have fled our land and come here. It is because of their subversion that today brother has turned against brother and there are rifts and differences between members of the same family. Our sincere advice is that

you interrogate them and punish them by exiling them from your kingdom. The best thing for both, the security of your kingdom and your people would be to throw them out. Or else these people will instigate insurrection and anarchy in your land, just as they did in their own. We hope that you will pay due importance to our sincere advice and banish these short-sighted and unfortunate people from your land."

After listening to this speech by 'Amr bin 'Aas, Najâshi nodded his head and said,

"I am happy that you have come at a very fortunate moment, but I cannot arrive at a decision to expel these people from my land until I have heard their viewpoint."

Then he ordered one of his men to look for these men and present them before him in court.

Umm Salamah writes,

"The royal messenger got in touch us and informed us about the Emperor's order. We were very worried, wondering what was going to happen next. We did not wish to go, fearing the consequences. At the same we could not ignore the royal command. After lengthy deliberations we came to the conclusion that the best thing would be to go before the Emperor and tell him all he facts in detail. It was also decided unanimously that the leader of the delegation, Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ, would present our case.

We presented ourselves before Emperor Najâshi. The court was in session and all the noblemen and ministers of state - for religious affairs and for foreign affairs - were present. There was pin-drop silence in the court. We wished the Emperor and took our seats. The fact that we did not bow low or prostrate ourselves before Najâshi was against the accepted code of conduct and etiquette. Shocked, all those present in the court looked at us askance. Suddenly we were asked in thunderous tones by the Emperor himself, 'Why did you not follow the procedure of the court and prostrate yourself before the Emperor?'

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ, standing erect answered in very clear and bold tones, Respected Sir, we only prostrate before the one True Allâh, and

do not bow down before any human being."

He asked, "Who has taught you this?"

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رض replied, "We used to worship idols and eat the flesh of dead animals. We did not know the difference between the lawful and the forbidden. We did not bother about our neighbours, and used to lead lewd and vulgar lives. Breaking the sacred bonds of blood and kinship had become second nature with us. Might was right and the strong were ever ready to swallow up the weak. We were fumbling around in the darkness of ignorance, when Allâh عز وجل sent His Messenger to us; we were familiar with his family tradition of honesty, sincerity and truthfulness. He explained to us how to adore the One True Allâh, and not give any other the same position or importance as him. He told us to give up the worship of false idols. He taught us how to pray to Him and to fast and to give the poor due. He taught us to speak the truth, be honest in our dealings and treat our kith and kin with gentleness and kindness. He said we should be considerate in our dealings with our neighbours. We were strictly forbidden to indulge in wrongful killing, lying, slander, adultery and cheating, especially of orphans. We were moved by his honesty, integrity and truthfulness and loved him for it. Thus we accepted his Message and believing him to be the Messenger of the One True Allâh, we thought it was an honour to follow his doctrines and his teachings.

When we started to walk on the path he had shown us and worship Allâh عز وجل, the chieftains of the Quraish were displeased with us. They tried their best to force us to go back to our old ways and worship idols. When we refused to give up the worship of Allâh عز وجل, accept what was forbidden to be lawful, and proclaimed our determination to follow the teachings of Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ, the whole tribe became our enemy. They tried to persecute us in every possible way and tortured us. Even our means of earning our livelihood were closed off to us. We perforce had to leave our motherland and came here to your country because we had heard of your sympathy for the oppressed and of your sense of justice and fair play. We hope that under your wise rule we will find every kind of protection and we will not face any cruelty or persecution."

Najâshi asked Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رض, "Do you remember any part of

this Divine Message which changed your whole way of life?"

When *Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib* ﷺ answered in the affirmative, *Najâshi* asked him to recite some verses from the Noble Qur'ân.

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ then recited in moving tones the verses from Surah Maryam; they seemed to have a magical effect on the hearers. They had such an impact on *Najâshi* that he started to weep. Seeing him, their powerful Emperor, in tears, the eyes of all the ministers and peers also turned moist. The Emperor's beard was wet with the tears he had shed; even the copies of the Bible which lay open before the padres were wet with tears.

Najâshi addressing the padres, the ministers and the noblemen assembled in his court, said;

"The Message that we have heard today and the Message which was revealed to 'Isa ﷺ seem to have the same origin and the same substance. Both these edifying illuminations seem to have emanated from the same source."

Then turning towards 'Amr bin 'Aas and 'Abdullâh bin Abi Rabee'ah he said;

"You may leave now. I cannot hand over to you these friends who are living images of piety, loyalty and truth. I am not interested in your gifts either, please take them back. If I were not bound by the responsibilities and duties of my position as a ruler, I would have gone to Al-Madinah to gain the honour of meeting Muhammad ﷺ, and to receive his blessings in person."

Ibn Hishâm on the authority of Imam Sha'bi narates that on the day of the triumph in the Battle of Khaibar, *Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib* ﷺ presented himself before the Prophet ﷺ. He had come directly from Ethiopia to Khaibar. When the Prophet ﷺ saw him he was very happy and kissed him on his forehead and said to him affectionately, "I don't know if the victory at Khaibar gives me more pleasure or your arrival here."

Emperor *Najâshi* had with great ceremony and respect seen his guests off on two boats with *Umaiyyah Al-Zamri*. Among them were *Ja'far*

bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ and his wife, Asmâ' bint 'Umais.

Sahih Al-Bukhari quoting Abu Musâ Ash'ari ﷺ says,

"We were living in Yemen when we learnt that the Prophet ﷺ had migrated to Al-Madinah. Anxious to meet him we made preparations to travel to Al-Madinah. With me were fifty other people of my tribe. Among them were my two brothers, Abu Burdah and Abu Rahm. We got onto a boat in Yemen and it took us to Ethiopia. We got off there and met with Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. We also reached Khaibar after the Mujâhideen had won the battle and had the honour of meeting the Prophet ﷺ there. When some of our friends met us there they said, "O people of the boats, we are superior to you since we are migrants."

The wife of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ, Asmâ' bint 'Umais went to meet Umm-ul-Mo'mineen Hafsa رضي الله عنها to her house. 'Umar Khattâb ﷺ had also come there to meet his daughter. He asked her who the lady was. She told him she was Asmâ' bint 'Umais. He asked if she was the lady who had come by sea from Ethiopia, and if she was the wife of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ.

Asmâ' replied that she was the person he was asking about. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ then said,

"You people who migrated to Ethiopia, remember we are superior to you and closer to the Prophet ﷺ, since you have been living there in Ethiopia in peace and tranquillity." His tone and what he said riled Asmâ' bint 'Umais. She retorted angrily, "There is no doubt that you lived near the Prophet ﷺ. He fed the people who were hungry and educated those who were ignorant. But we are not far behind you, because it was the Prophet ﷺ who ordered us to migrate to a distant land. We stayed there only in obedience to his commands and to gain the blessings of Allâh ﷺ. We did not go there of our own free will, neither did we stay there because we wished to. I don't think you realise that we were terror-stricken for nights and days on end. Today you are claiming superiority on the basis of your migration, and do not have any sympathy for the troubles faced by us migrants. I swear by Allâh ﷺ that until I bring all this to

the notice of the Prophet ﷺ I will neither eat nor drink."

When the Prophet ﷺ came, Asmâ' bint 'Umais narrated the whole conversation to him and asked him,

"Is it right to say that our migration is of no importance at all?"

The Prophet ﷺ listened very attentively to all she had to say and replied,

"O people of the boat may you be happy. You have had the distinction of migrating twice, and these people have received that honour only once."

Asmâ' bint 'Umais says:

"Abu Musâ Ash'ari  and all his companions came to me very eagerly to hear this *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ, because it was without doubt a great honour to be so distinguished by our beloved Prophet ﷺ. They were so delighted that it was as if they had received the treasures of the whole world."

It is worth remembering in this connection that Asmâ' bint 'Umais was the sister of *Umm-ul-Mo'mineen* Maimoonah رضي الله عنها. Another sister was Lababah Umm-ul-Fazal who was married to 'Abbas . She is famous as one of the most intelligent, sensitive and fortunate ladies in the annals of Islamic history.

Barâ' bin 'Aazib relates that in the month of Zul-qâ'dah in the year 6th Hijrah, the Prophet ﷺ set out for Makkah with his Companions to perform '*Umrah*. But the Quraish prevented him for doing so because of their religious enmity. A treaty was prepared on the basis of mutual compromise at a place called Hudaibiyah, and came to be known as the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. When the Prophet ﷺ signed on the bottom line as 'Muhammad *Rasulallâh*' or 'Messenger of Allâh', the Quraish objected. Their contention was that if they accepted him as the Messenger of Allâh, then there was no reason why they would have stopped him from performing '*Umrah*. They said, "You should sign your name as Muhammad bin 'Abdullâh." Displaying great fortitude, the Prophet ﷺ said,

"That is no problem; after all I am Muhammad bin 'Abdullâh and also the Messenger of Allâh."

But the Quraish stuck to their guns; taking into consideration the prevailing circumstances and displaying great civility, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Ali, erase the word *Rasulallâh*."

Ali ﷺ replied, "O Messenger of Allâh how can my hand dare to erase this word?" The Prophet ﷺ ignored 'Ali's questioning his decision as it was rooted in his great love for him. He erased the word himself, and wrote 'Muhammad bin 'Abdullâh' as the Quraish demanded.

To all intents and purposes it seemed that the Treaty of Hudaibiyah was in favour of the Quraish. They tried their utmost to get all those conditions ratified which were in their favour. Some of the Companions expressed their unhappiness with this unequal accord, but in the long run the agreement did benefit the Muslim *Ummah*.

Some of the terms and conditions are mentioned below.

1. No one would enter Makkah with swords, unless they were sheathed
2. If any citizen of Makkah fled to Al-Madinah, he would be sent back.
3. On the other hand if a resident of Al-Madinah went to Makkah, the people of Makkah were not bound to return him.
4. This time the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions would have to return without entering Makkah and performing the '*Umrah*'.
5. The following year Muslims would be allowed to stay in Makkah for three days only.

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah the following year, it was a sight worth seeing. After he had stayed there for three days, the Quraish asked 'Ali ﷺ to tell his leader that the three days allowed him according to the terms of the treaty were over and he should leave.

When he started to depart from Makkah, the orphaned daughter of his uncle, Hamzah ﷺ, started to cry and asked him to take her along with him. 'Ali ﷺ caught her hand. Then the argument of guardianship

arose between 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib, Zaid bin Hârithah and Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رضي الله عنهم.

The argument of 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib was that she was his uncle's daughter. Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib said he had the better right as her mother's sister was married to him. And Zaid bin Hârithah said she should be handed over to him as she was his brother's daughter.

When the Prophet ﷺ heard this argument he ruled in favour of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib, saying that a mother's sister was closest to the mother; hence she should be brought up in the house of Ja'far.

The Prophet ﷺ wished to pacify the ruffled feelings of his three faithful Companions. He said to 'Ali, "You are from me and I am from you."

He turned around to Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib, saying, "In your appearance and disposition you resemble me."

Then he told Zaid bin Hârithah, "You are my brother and friend."

All three of his Companions were very happy to hear of his feelings for them. The claim of Zaid bin Hârithah that the girl was his brother's daughter was based on the fraternal relationship established in Al-Madinah when he and Hamzah had been declared brothers in Islam.

The statement of the Prophet ﷺ that Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib resembled him both in looks and character was a matter of pride and the greatest compliment and honour that he could possibly have received and that too from the lips of the Prophet ﷺ himself!

It is written in *Seerah Ibn Hishâm* that a caravan of ten people, fed up of the oppressive and tyrannical behaviour of the Quraish set out for Ethiopia. Among them were :-

'Uthmân bin 'Affân and his wife, Ruqiyah bint Prophet ﷺ from the tribe of Banu Umayyah.

'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Auf who was from the Banu Zahra. Abu Salamah and his wife Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها who were from the tribe of Banu Makhzoom. 'Uthmân bin Madh'oon was from the Banu

Jama'. 'Âmer bin Rabee'ah and his wife belonged to the Banu 'Adi. Abu Sabrah was from the Banu 'Âmer and Suhail bin Baidha' was from the Banu Hârith etc were with the caravan.

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ was leader of the second group of eighty-three pilgrims. He lived in Ethiopia until the Battle of Khaibar. Emperor Najâshi was influenced by him and converted to Islam. He and his companions were given the status of royal guests during their stay there.

All the attributes necessary for a successful general or leader were developed to an excellent degree of perfection in the character of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ. Timely decisions, quick repartees, smooth eloquence and firm courage in speaking out his mind in the face of the enemy - all these qualities were to be found in him.

How did he get those enviable titles of 'Zuljanahain' and 'At-Tayyâr'? Was it because he died courageously in the battlefield? No! There are many martyrs slain in *Jihâd*. Was it because he was a sincere and true *Mo'min* and Muslim? This cannot be, because there are many such true Muslims, in word and in deed.

The title of 'Zuljanahain' was given to him in acknowledgement of his services as a General in the Battle of Motah. Both his arms were cut off, but he did not allow the flag of Islam to fall to the ground. One day the Prophet ﷺ said;

"I dreamt last night that Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ was among a group of angels, and he had two wings on either side of his body. The front part of the wings had some blood on them. With the help of his wings he flew wherever he wished in Paradise with in the company of the angels."

Thus he was given the title of 'Zuljanahain' after he attained martyrdom. And because he flew in Paradise with the angels he was called 'At-Tayyâr' or 'The Bird'.

When the Prophet ﷺ received news that Sharjeel bin 'Amr Al Ghasâni, the governor of King Herqal of Rome had killed his ambassador,

Hârith bin 'Umair, in a heartless manner, he was grieved. He readied an army of three thousand *Mujâhideen* and appointed Zaid bin Hârithah as the commander. He ordered him to reach the place where the ambassador had been slain. He also set up a chain of command. If Zaid bin Hârithah was martyred, Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib should take his place. In case something happened to him 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah would assume command. In case he too was martyred the *Mujâhideen* could choose a commander for themselves.

The army reached Motah on the borders of Syria and encamped there. King Herqal had already reached there with a huge Roman army of a hundred thousand men. Another hundred thousand had gathered there from the tribe of Halif to help him. Now the war was between the small Islamic army of three thousand *Mujâhideen* and an army of two hundred thousand Roman soldiers.

But the *Mujâhideen* did not lose courage when they was this huge army; on the other hand their spirit of *Jihâd* and the desire for martyrdom became more intense. The fact that this tiny army courageously faced the challenge of the massive forces of the enemy was entirely due to the strength of their faith. These pure souls could smell the perfumed air of Paradise and wished to enter its enchanted frontiers.

The two armies faced off in the battlefield; and the air echoed with the sound of flashing swords. The general Zaid bin Hârithah was martyred fighting valiantly.

Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib moved up and took the flag from his hand. The Roman offensive was very fierce; one of the Roman soldiers struck at his right hand and cut it off. He picked up the flag with his left hand. The Roman cut off this as well. Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib still did not allow the flag to fall and held on to it with his arms. A Roman soldier now attacked him so fiercely that he lost his life, and gained the status of a martyr.

'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah took the flag and the command next, but soon he too was martyred. Then by common consent Khâlid bin Waleed was chosen commander. He fought so bravely that he scattered the enemy, breaking nine swords in the process. The next day he brought about a lot of changes in the tactics employed. He switched the right wing of the army to the left and vice versa. He told

some of the *Mujâhideen* to throw up a lot of dust; the result of all these sudden changes was that the enemy thought reinforcements had arrived. They panicked and started to retreat. After deceiving them in this manner for a few days, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ managed to save the lives of the *Mujâhideen* and get them out safely.

This was a remarkable achievement of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ - that he managed to save the lives of a handful of *Mujâhideen* from the clutches of an army consisting of two hundred thousand soldiers. Experts in military strategy were amazed by this miraculous feat. In reality bringing a tiny band of men back to safety with minimal losses against an army many times its size was an incredible exploit.

The wife of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ, Asmâ' bint 'Umais رضي الله عنها says,

"One day I was sitting at home after bathing my children, when the Prophet ﷺ came to visit. He took my children in his lap and he looked sorrowful. Tears started to flow down his cheeks. I got nervous and asked him what was the matter and if there was some bad news. He answered that Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ had been martyred in the cause of Allâh ﷺ. I was grief-stricken and started to weep. He left after giving this sad news and went home and told his family to prepare food for the family of Ja'far ﷺ. Some of the women of Al-Madinah came to condole with me. In order to console me one of them told me that the Prophet ﷺ had said that Allâh ﷺ had placed my husband in a very high position. In place of the two arms he had lost he had been given two wings to fly wherever he pleased in the company of angels."

'Abdullâh bin 'Umar ﷺ relates,

"I was also present at this encounter. We saw his body - it had more than ninety wounds. What was remarkable was that all the wounds were in the region of the breast, and not a single wound was in the back. This is a sign of a heroic man who did not once turn his back on the enemy."

When the army returned to Al-Madinah after the war, some of the people of the city were not happy with their performance; tossing up earth in the air they shouted, "Look! The cowards who fled from the battlefield have come back!"

When the Prophet ﷺ saw this he said:

"Listen, these people are not cowards, neither have they run away from the battlefield. This is a military strategy - to refresh themselves and return to confront the enemy."

Doubtless this was a wise move by the Prophet ﷺ.

To get a handful of companions out of the mouth of the dragon, as it were, is proof of great bravery and courage. This was the first martial exploit of Khâlid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه after he converted to Islam. As time passed he displayed his invaluable qualities of heroism and valour in ever greater measure.

The nightingale of the court of the Prophet ﷺ, Hassân bin Thâbit رضي الله عنه, recited extempore beautifully sad verses, which have become important classics of the elegiac genre of Arabic poetry. When he was martyred Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رضي الله عنه was about forty-one years old.

At the time of death he was reciting the verses of a war epic; the following is a rough translation -

This is great! Near now the pure Jannah and its cool waters;
 For the Romans the torture of Jahannum is near.
 These unbelievers, by birth are far from nobility;
 It is my duty to lop off their heads as I pass them.

Emperor Najâshi accepted Islam because he was moved by the invitation of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رضي الله عنه. 'Najâshi' was a title common to all rulers of Ethiopia. The name of the ruler who was a contemporary of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رضي الله عنه was Ashamah. It is written in the 'Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd' that when the Prophet ﷺ returned to Al-Madinah after signing the Treaty of Hudaibiyah in the year 8th Hijrah, he sent 'Amr bin Umayyah Al-Dhamri to Ethiopia to Emperor Najâshi with a letter. He

received the letter and kissed it reverently, descending from his throne. Displaying respectful hospitality and humility, he sat down on the ground, and recited the oath of allegiance to Islam.

In the year 9th Hijrah on his return from Tabook, he passed away. (To Allâh we belong and to Him we return.)

In a tradition attributed to Jâbir رض and recorded in Sahih Al-Bukhari it is said that the Prophet ﷺ announced the passing away of Najâshi to his Companions and offered his funeral prayers.

Ibn Habbâن has narrated on the authority of 'Imrân bin Hassain that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Your brother Najâshi has expired, let us offer funeral prayers for him." He moved forward and his Companions formed rows behind him. During the prayers he recited 'Allâho Akbar' four times. The swearing of the pledge of allegiance to Islam by Najâshi in the presence of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رض is a historic incident.

The unique excellence of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib رض in appearance and character was indeed enviable. He cut off the legs of his horse before he was martyred and fought as if obsessed by his passion for martyrdom. This was the forerunner of great honours to be bestowed on him by Allâh عز وجل.

The fact that he was elevated to a lofty position in Paradise is proof and acknowledgement of the great services rendered by him to Islam. His appointment as Commander-in-Chief in the Battle of Motah by the Prophet ﷺ is again a clear acknowledgement of his military prowess.

His intelligence and sound judgement is proved by the fact that he was one of the first to accept Islam.

He left for Paradise after gaining martyrdom having lived this earthly life for forty-one years.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Huthaifah bin Yamân

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“O Huthaifah! You have the right to call yourself either a Mohâjir or an Ansâr.”

Huthaifah bin Yamân



Huthaifah bin Yamân was of medium height and was sturdily built. He had shining white teeth that seemed to glitter at times like diamonds. His eyes were as sharp and keen as those of a hawk, and he had no problem finding the target for his arrows even in the dark. He was an experienced and valiant general who led a temperate life. He was also the confidant of the Prophet ﷺ. He had been the big-hearted and ascetic governor of Madyan. He used to keep awake at nights, praying. He knew the Noble Qur'ân by heart; in other words he was a *Hâfiâh* of the Noble Qur'ân. He was also learned in the *Hadith*.

He was the fortunate Companion who by his farsighted caution and vital planning in the Battle of Ahzâb, won the goodwill and confidence of the Prophet ﷺ. He was the son of Haseel bin Jabr Al 'Absi Al-Yamani who had been martyred in the Battle of Uhud. He was an ally of the Ansâr, and also helped the migrants.

Haseel bin Jabr was from the tribe of 'Abbâs which was known for its courage but had a reputation for treachery, murder and plunder as well. Haseel bin Jabr had killed a man¹ from his own tribe, and fled in panic to Al-Madinah. There he had found refuge with a man from the Banu 'Abd Al-Shâhal tribe. He was from Yemen and since the celebrated tribes of Aus and Khazraj were originally from Yemen, he had no

¹ Observance of tribal loyalty was an honourable tradition among the Arab tribes. Murder and plunder were common, in fact men who committed such acts against other tribes or wayfarers were considered brave heroes.

difficulty in finding a safe haven there. Very soon he got married to Rubâb bin Ka'b, a young woman from the Banu 'Abd Al-Shahal tribe. Soon a son was born to them whom they named Huthaifah.

Since Haseel bin Jabr was originally from Yemen, the people of Al-Madinah named the boy Yamâni. He came to be known by this name and soon his original name was forgotten.

When the son of Âmenah, Muhammad ﷺ proclaimed himself to be the Messenger of the One True Allâh, Huthaifah and his father migrated to Makkah and pledged allegiance in person to the Prophet ﷺ, and entered the fold of Islam.

Thus, these fortunate father and son had the honour of being the very first people to migrate in the cause of Islam. Since they were allies of the Banu 'Abd Al-Shahal in Al-Madinah they were blessed in that they were able to help those who migrated there from Makkah. Thus they were Ansârs as well. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said they had the liberty to call themselves either Ansâr or *Mohâjir*; but they preferred to be known as *Ansâr*.

Huthaifah bin Yamâni ﷺ is one of the select band of Companions who gained the distinction of performing daring exploits in the battlefield. He displayed remarkable courage in all the wars fought by the Prophet ﷺ, side by side with him. The only battle he missed was the Battle of Badr. Even here, both father and son set out to join the army, but they were encircled by the Quraish. Abu Jahl asked Yamâni ﷺ,

"Who are you young man and who is this old man with you?"

The youth replied very calmly;

"I am Huthaifah bin Yamâni 'Abasi and this is my father, Haseel bin Jabr 'Abasi."

Abu Jahl said,

"O so you are going to help Muhammad ﷺ?"

He replied, "We are going to Al-Madinah."

Abu Jahl told them that he was in charge of them and if they tried to go anywhere they would be killed. One of Abu Jahl's warriors then

whispered to him that if they harmed these two the whole 'Abas tribe would turn against them and it would not be in their interests to rouse the animosity of this whole tribe. On hearing this, Abu Jahl shook his head and questioned,

"So you both wish to go to Al-Madinah? We will free you on one condition; swear that you will not help Muhammad in the Battle of Badr."

The father and son took the oath in order to save their necks as there was no other way of getting out of the stranglehold he had on them. When they finally reached Al-Madinah, they told the Prophet ﷺ what had happened. He listened to them affectionately and then displaying great nobility of character, he said:

"You both should not break your promise to these disbelievers. Allâh ﷺ is our Protector and Helper."

Thus the Prophet ﷺ, by asking his Companions to remain true to their word given to an enemy made clear a principle which was fundamental and unique in the annals of military history. Courageous and great people always keep to their word of honour. In this instance it was the first battle of Islam; besides the unarmed *Mujâhideen* numbered only three hundred and thirteen, whereas the enemy numbered one thousand fully armed soldiers. The need of the hour was to have as many experienced men as possible. It was truly a great decision taken by the Prophet ﷺ - to allow two of his best and most valued men to sit out only because the enemy had perforce extracted a promise from them.

Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ and his father always regretted the fact that they had lost this opportunity to take part in one of the greatest battles of Islam.

In the Battle of Badr Allâh ﷺ blessed His small band of *Mujâhideen* with an astounding success. The generals of the disbelievers were slain. The arrogant and egotistical Abu Jahl intoxicated by his power, met the most disgraceful end possible. There was mourning in most of the houses of the enemy, who were left helpless. But they did not give up for long; the thirst for revenge reached its peak in the year 3rd Hijrah. They attacked Al-Madinah under the Command of Abu Sufyân ﷺ to avenge the death of their kith and kin at Badr.

The Prophet ﷺ came out at the head of the Muslim army to defend the city and encamped at the foot of Mount Uhud. The warriors of the two armies faced each other in the battlefield. The disbelievers could not withstand the attack of the *Mujāhideen*. Leaving behind all their arms and equipment they fled. The *Mujāhideen* started to gather the booty of war. The Prophet ﷺ had left a band of fifty men under the leadership of 'Abdullāh bin Jubair ﷺ, on the mountain, and instructed them not to move out of the mountain pass under any circumstances. Most of them thought this order was valid only for the duration of the battle; so they also left the mountain unguarded and joined the others in collecting the booty.

Khālid bin Waleed was the enemy commander as he had not yet converted to Islam; taking this opportunity he led his men by way of the mountain pass to launch a sudden attack on the Muslims. This was such a powerful attack that the Muslims were barely able to hold their own. As a result the *Mujāhideen* suffered a heavy loss of life. Seventy *Mujāhideen* were martyred and the Prophet ﷺ was injured. He lost his teeth and the chains of his armour pierced his face.

Two Companions, Yamān bin Jabir and Thābit bin Waqās رضي الله عنهما who had become too old to fight in the *Jihād*, were put in charge of the tents of the women and children. But when they saw their Muslim brothers attaining martyrdom they also were inspired to fight. They picked up their swords and entered the battlefield. Thābit ﷺ gained his goal of martyrdom. Yamān bin Jabir ﷺ got caught up in a circle of *Mujāhideen* who did not know his identity and thought that he was one of the enemy. In the tumult and confusion of the battle he was wounded fatally. When Huthaifah bin Yamān ﷺ saw him he realised what had happened and called out, "Brothers this is my father! Stop!" But in all the noise of the battle no one heard him. When he saw his father's dead body he called out in choking tones.

"My brothers, what have you done? May Allāh ﷺ forgive you. Your swords have been tainted with the blood of my great father."

All the Companions were perturbed when they saw what had happened. Suddenly everything seemed to change; though victory belonged to neither, the Muslims suffered a heavy loss of life due to

the fact that they were encircled by the enemy. After reaching Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ wished to give blood money to Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ. But he was magnanimous even in his grief and gave the amount for the *Mujâhideen* and said,

“O Prophet of Allâh ﷺ my father yearned to be a martyr and he achieved his desire. O Allâh ﷺ, bear witness that I have dedicated this amount of the blood money for the Muslims.”

This gesture of his raised his status in the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ left Al-Madinah with an army of one thousand soldiers under him for Mount Uhud. Even before reaching his destination he had to face the treachery of the hypocrite, 'Abdullâh bin Ubâbî, who left taking three hundred of his men with him. There were only seven hundred *Mujâhideen* left under him now. Abu Sufyân was facing him with an army of three thousand armed men. Having learnt their lesson from the Battle of Badr, they had organised their ranks very well. In spite of the huge difference in numbers they launched such a daring and powerful attack that the enemy was shaken and could not face them. The ranks of the Qureish were thrown into confusion. If only the fifty men under 'Abdullâh bin Jubâir ﷺ had not deserted their posts, this would have been a forerunner of a decisive victory for the Muslims. But what was an error from the point of view of military strategy changed the situation in favour of the enemy. The sudden attack and the turn of events disconcerted and distressed the Muslims and they started fighting wildly and killing their own people in the ensuing confusion. The disbelievers took this to mean that it was a victory for them and they turned to go back. The Muslims returned to Al-Madinah disappointed; the Prophet ﷺ, however, reorganised them the very next day and set out in pursuit of the enemy.

Abu Sufyân realised too late that they should have followed the Muslims to Al-Madinah and plundered and killed them in their own homes. He regretted that a great opportunity to fulfil his desire to destroy the Muslims had been lost, and felt that they should never have returned empty-handed. When he consulted with his men regarding this slip of his, they were also of the opinion that they should turn back and attack Al-Madinah. But even before they set out one of the leaders of the Banu Khazâ'ah tribe who happened to be passing that way said:

"What are you thinking about? For your information the Muslims have already organised themselves and are coming in pursuit of you people. You will see them appear any moment."

When they realised what was happening Abu Sufyân and his disbelievers changed their dastardly plans and took off for Makkah. The fact that in spite of the numerical minority of the Muslims and the loss of lives suffered by them, the disbelievers did not dare to face them speaks volumes for the awe that they inspired.

On an examination of the Battle of Uhud it becomes clear that the factors the Prophet ﷺ gave weight to in his strategy - for example the defence of Mount Uhud - were crucial to winning the battle. The moment a vacuum was created on the mountain they suffered heavy losses. And it was an innovative move that was made in military history when they followed the policy of regrouping themselves the very next day to pursue the enemy. Even in modern day warfare this tactic of chasing the enemy to keep him away from their capital, is considered to be a sign of triumph. By chasing the enemy, the Prophet ﷺ infused the Battle of Uhud with an aura of victory.

The greatest difficulty faced by the Muslims in Al-Madinah was that of the hypocrites and the Jews. They used to devise plots continuously to harm the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. Finally the Prophet ﷺ, considering the critical situation, revealed to Huthaifah bin Yamâن ﷺ the names of these hypocrites who were pretending to be Muslims. This was a top secret that he did not talk about to anyone but Huthaifah bin Yamâن ﷺ. He told him to keep an eye on the movements of these hypocrites so as to nip in the bud their conspiracies against Islam and its followers. Thus, from that day on, Huthaifah bin Yamâن ﷺ had the honour of being a confidant of the Prophet ﷺ who used the natural talents and skills bestowed on him by Allâh ﷺ. He was intelligent, quick, wise, and farsighted. He also had an astute understanding of matters which helped him to solve tricky problems.

In the Battle of the Trenches the disbelievers had trapped the Muslims resident in Al-Madinah in a lengthy siege. It was a very hard and difficult time, and the Qurashî and their allies too were not having an easy time of it. Suddenly a dust storm with swift winds broke out; the

tents of the Quraish were uprooted and torn apart, the huge tureens with cooked food were tossed upside down and lights were extinguished. There was dust everywhere - in people's eyes, noses and throats. In seconds the might and power of the enemy was destroyed and their nefarious designs turned to dust.

From the military point of view victory is deemed to belong to the side which displays fortitude and courage at such critical moments. It is the side which starts to mourn and panic which is considered the loser.

At this moment in time the Prophet ﷺ needed the expertise and experience of Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ. He sent him to find out the actual state of affairs of the enemy. Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ disguised himself and risked his life to enter the ranks of the enemy. Of course he did not talk about this ride into the jaws of death to anyone. It is worth reading about it in his own words. He says,

“One night we were sitting in rows; the tents of Abu Sufyân were in the northern part of Al-Madinah, and the people of the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraidhah were in the south. I felt that the danger was greater from them and that they might harm our women and children. We had not seen a darker night and could not even see our own hands. Neither had we experienced a more dreadful storm. The sound and fury of the thunder and the flashes of lightening were terrifying.”

The hypocrites from the very beginning had started making excuses and asking permission to leave. They told the Prophet ﷺ that since their houses were not locked, the enemy could not only enter them and cause irreparable damage, but also harm their wives and children. But there was no such danger, and they were lying. That night the Prophet ﷺ was going around checking on each of his *Mujâhid* to see how they were doing. When he reached where I was he could not recognise me in the darkness. Tired, cold and hungry, I was huddled in a small sheet and crouched low with my head between my knees. He asked who it was. I answered that it was his servant, Huthaifah ﷺ.

He said, ‘Huthaifah, why are you sitting here?’ I answered that I was feeling exhausted with cold and hunger. He whispered to me softly,

"The enemy are in a perilous situation, go and mingle with their men and study their real position. Then come and tell me what their intentions are."

I immediately got up on hearing his command, but I was in fear of the enemy and was trembling from head to foot. When he saw my condition he offered the following supplication to Allâh ﷺ, 'O Lord Protect Huthaifah from the front and back, from the right and the left, from above and below.' I swear by Allâh Almighty that the moment he finished his words of prayer, I stopped feeling cold and fear of the enemy left my heart. When I left on this mission the Prophet ﷺ advised me to find out only the hidden plans of the enemy and not to take any other action under any circumstances. I moved around the enemy ranks in the darkness in such a manner that no one could guess who I really was. Some time later Abu Sufyân addressed his troops and said,

'O people of the Quraish! Today I wish to say something to you, but I fear that this may reach the ears of Muhammad ﷺ. Every individual should check who is seated on either side of him.' As soon as I heard these words, I turned to the man seated next to me and holding his hand asked him who he was and what was his name. Thus he did not get a chance to ask me anything and my ruse worked."

Abu Sufyân then said,

"O people of the tribe of Quraish! You will not find any peace here. The storm has killed our animals, our tents have been blown away and the people of the Banu Quraidhah have been separated from us. In my opinion it is better to quit this place; I myself am leaving." Saying this, he got on to his camel and left."

Huthaifah bin Yamâن ﷺ continues, "That night I could have killed Abu Sufyân, but the Prophet ﷺ had specifically ordered me not to do anything other than get information. I got out of the enemy ranks as stealthily as I had got in and reached the presence of the Prophet ﷺ. I saw that he was praying covered with a small sheet.

After finishing his prayers he beckoned to me. It was extremely cold and he covered me with a corner of his small sheet. When I gave him

the news of the enemy's retreat, he was very happy and started to recite phrases in praise of Allâh ﷺ.

Throughout his life Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ remained in constant touch with the secrets and military tactics and strategies of the enemy. The *Khulfa' Rashideen* always used to turn to him in the matter of the hypocrites. Before leading the funeral prayers of any Muslim who died, 'Umar Farooq ﷺ would always first inquire if Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ was present. If the people said he was present, he would lead the prayers. And if the people said he was not there, then he would become doubtful regarding the dead man's faith and not lead the prayers.

On one occasion 'Umar Farooq ﷺ asked Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ if any among his government's representatives was a hypocrite. He answered that there was only one such person. When asked who it was he refused to name him. Huthaifah ﷺ says soon after this 'Umar Farooq ﷺ removed him from office. He says,

"I felt this was because Allâh ﷺ had given him guidance in this matter."

Few people realise that Huthaifah bin Yamân ﷺ was the one who had conquered the very important Iranian territories of Nahâwind, Deenor, Ree and Hamdân.

Another great exploit of his was that when different copies of the Noble Qur'ân began to be circulated during his time; he got one version for all by common consent.

In spite of all his noble qualities and great achievements the awe and majesty of Allâh ﷺ always held sway over his heart. He dreaded the Day of Judgement and the punishment that could follow. When he fell seriously ill and his end was near some Companions came to nurse him. He asked them what time it was. They said it would soon be dawn. He called out,

"I ask protection from the morning which will send me to *Jahannum* (Hell)."

He repeated this sentence twice and then asked if his shroud had been prepared. When the Companions replied that it had, he said. "Do not

clothe me in a very expensive shroud. If the verdict of Allâh ﷺ is in my favour it will change into the best possible robe. If it is otherwise, then even this shroud will rot and become torn and tattered." After this he kept on repeating these phrases of supplication to Allâh ﷺ, "O Lord You know that during my whole life I preferred poverty to wealth, humility to pride and arrogance and the life of the Hereafter to the life of this world.

When his soul departed from his body he said:

"See my beloved has come to receive me eagerly. The one who is disgraced in the Court of Allâh ﷺ will not be successful."

May Allâh ﷺ have Mercy on Huthaifah bin Yamâن ﷺ; he was a remarkable man of great qualities.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“O Dharâr, it is a fact that your trade did not go to waste.”

Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi

Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi  was a wealthy member of the Banu Asad tribe. Among his herds were a thousand priceless pure bred camels. He was a good-looking, brave and heroic man who was an expert with all kinds of weapons whether it be the sword or the spear or the bow and arrow. He was also an ace rider who inspired terror in the ranks of the Roman army with his audacious tactics. When the Romans saw this terrifying general advancing towards them relentlessly, they fled screaming that a jinn had come to attack them.

He was unmatched in his mode of warfare - sitting bareback on his horse and reciting martial poetry, he would rush boldly into the ranks of the enemy. They would tremble at this warrior's approach and he would not flinch even if he had to face a thousand enemy soldiers. By reason of his incomparable qualities as a *Mujâhid* his name will glitter on the firmament of Islam for all time.

Besides being famous as one of the greatest *Mujâhideen* of Islam he was also honoured for his poetic skills and especially for his inspiring martial poetry. When he came at the head of his delegation from the Banu Asad tribe to accept Islam and swear allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ in person, he presented his thousand camels with their shepherds to the treasury or Baithul Mâl for the use of the Muslim *Ummah* and then recited these beautiful rhythmic verses before the Prophet ﷺ.

I have stopped drinking wine
And broken my goblets
And given up futile pursuits -

Those pleasures weaken one's mind and spirit.

Alas my best years have passed

In fighting against Islam

Allâh! I have accepted Islam

And traded all my wealth for you

Lord please do not let it go to waste!

When the Prophet ﷺ heard these words he smiled and told him, "O Dharâr, it is a fact that your trade did not go to waste."

When Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi decided to embrace Islam because of the impact that had been made on him by the integrity, truthfulness and sincerity of the Prophet ﷺ, he spoke to some of the people of his tribe who were like-minded. They all agreed to travel to Al-Madinah to meet the Prophet ﷺ in person and swear allegiance to Islam in his presence. Before setting out on his journey he decided to dedicate all his wealth which was in the shape of a herd of a thousand pure bred camels to the cause of Islam. When the Prophet ﷺ heard of this act of sacrifice which showed an absolute disregard for the world and its wealth, he was very pleased. He was overjoyed that a young fearless chieftain of an enemy tribe in all sincerity and using his God-gifted wisdom and intelligence had decided to become a comrade and part of the Muslim *Ummah*.

Stirred by the dedication and sacrifice of her brother, Khawlah bint Azwar also decided to enter into the fold of Islam. She is that great lady who wore a mask and fought the enemy courageously and slew many enemy soldiers with her razor sharp sword. When the enemy witnessed the exploits of her sword, her skill with her spear and the swiftness of her movements in courting martyrdom, they were terrified. Even the Muslims were amazed and wondered who this lightning-like *Mujâhid* might be who was fighting on their side. Some of them thought it must be Khâlid bin Waleed رض who had appeared masked in the battlefield. But they soon realized that Khâlid رض was present and fighting along with them, but with no mask! This

mystified them even more! In fact Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ himself was baffled as to the identity of this masked *Mujâhid*. Finally he went near and asked, "Who are you? And from where have you come?"

A voice answered;

"O Commander-in-Chief please do not be surprised. I am Khawlah bint Azwar, the sister of Dharâr ﷺ."

The *Mujâhideen* were proud and surprised to hear this feminine voice and their eyes filled with tears as he thought that if all the *Ummah* - men and women alike - had this passionate spirit of *Jihâd* and such martial skills in facing the enemy, then nothing in the whole wide world could defeat the Muslim *Ummah* or stop them from achieving success.

Taleehah bin Khawaled Asadi was a cunning hypocritical time-server of the Banu Asad tribe. Following in the footsteps of Musailmah Kaththâb and Aswad 'Ansi, he too declared himself to be a prophet in the last days of the Prophet ﷺ. The Banu 'Abas, Banu Zeeban, Banu Bakr Banu Thei, the Ghathfan and Badwi tribes became allies of Taleehah. They proclaimed that the false prophet of Banu Asad was dearer to them than the True Prophet ﷺ of the Quraish. They wished to follow him basically because they did not like the government at Al-Madinah. They wanted to get freedom from it in every respect. Besides they thought of *Zakât* as a penalty being exacted from them. They absolutely hated the idea of paying this 'penalty' to the government at Al-Madinah.

At first Taleehah bin Khawaled Asadi had camped at a famous place called Samira'; then he chose to move to Bazakhah, because he thought it was more suitable for conducting a war.

Musailmah Kaththâb had declared himself a prophet from Yamâmah. Taleehah bin Khawaled of the Banu Asad tribe had staked a claim to prophethood. Aswad 'Ansi had made a similar claim from Yemen and suffered an ignominious defeat. The Prophet ﷺ sent Dharâr bin Azwar ﷺ to fight against Taleehah bin Khawaled and instructed him to first form a liaison with the Muslims of the Banu Asad and then launch an attack against him. Dharâr ﷺ obeyed his orders; he

organised the Muslims before proceeding to attack Taleehah at the place where he was encamped.

But even before the actual fighting started they received news of the passing away of the Prophet ﷺ. The *Mujâhideen* were of course grief-stricken. The new converts were confused and did not wish to fight, but the experienced *Mujâhideen* became even more determined to succeed in their mission. Taleehah's army had increased numerically and many of the tribes had forgotten their petty rivalries and united with him. But the Muslim soldiers with a renewed spirit and fervour, entered the battlefield under Dharâr bin Azwar ؓ. However, because of the increase in the numbers of the enemy, Khâlid bin Waleed ؓ reached the battlefield and took over the command of the army of Islam.

'Ainiya bin Hassân was the Commander of Taleehah's army. Taleehah himself was sitting in his tent covered with a blanket, and in order to deceive people, was apparently waiting for a divine revelation. The two armies came out and the battle commenced. In between the fighting 'Ainiyah bin Hassân came to Taleehah's tent to ask if the revelation had come. Taleehah answered, "Not yet." And 'Ainiyah went back to resume fighting. He realized that the Muslims were fighting vigorously without caring for their lives. Again he went to Taleehah's tent and asked, "Has Angel Jibreel brought any message?" He answered, "Yes, he told me that I would get a task which is like his task. And you will become famous and well known in a way that you will never forget."

'Ainiyah was very annoyed replied angrily, "That's right! You are going to face a fate which you will certainly never forget!" 'Ainiyah called out to his people of the Banu Fazarah tribe, "O loyal people of my tribe who are ready to sacrifice your lives! Stop fighting and run from away from the battlefield to save your lives! Listen to me! And believe me Taleehah is a liar and a cunning imposter."

Taleehah had made arrangements to flee beforehand. He readied his horse and got on it with his wife, Naweerah, and escaped to Syria. There he found refuge with the tribe of Banu Kalb. Thus all the forces he had united against Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ were destroyed. When Taleehah came to know that most of the tribes had re-entered the fold

of Islam, he also proclaimed in the court of the Caliph that he had become a Muslim.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, great Muslim that he was, forgave him magnanimously. When 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ became Caliph, Taleehah came to him to swear allegiance to him personally. *Amir-ul-Mo'mineen* 'Umar Farooq ﷺ told him, "You are the murderer of Akâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ and Thâbit bin Aqram. Get out of my sight! These two were respectable and brave Arabs." Taleehah answered, "*Amir-ul-Mo'mineen*, these people were martyred and have attained very high positions. Why are you angry with me? I have entered the fold of Islam in all sincerity. Please do not deprive me of the privilege of swearing allegiance to you personally." When he heard this, *Amir-ul-Mo'mineen* 'Umar Farooq ﷺ accepted his pledge. Then he asked him, "Where have your conjurer's tricks gone?" He answered, "All kinds of jugglery disappeared after I accepted Islam." Thus Taleehah's life in his later years became better after he became a Muslim.

The brilliant hero of Islam, Dharâr bin Azwar, had been sent on this mission since the person falsely claiming to be a prophet was from his tribe, the Banu Asad. It was the good fortune of Taleehah that he was not caught by the Muslims. Since he had escaped to Syria he lived to take advantage of the opportunity to convert to Islam. Thus, he died a Muslim and his life in the Hereafter would Insha'Allâh be good.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ finally got rid of all the apostates. All the people who were proclaiming themselves to be prophets, like Musailmah Kaththâb, Taleehah bin Khawaled and Aswad 'Ansi and their followers were crushed. After that he turned his attention to the conquest of the emperors of Rome and Iran, Qaiser and Khosro respectively. These were very powerful antagonists of Islam. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ displaying great daring and courage ordered the army to gather under his flag to demolish Caesar of Rome, a powerful enemy of Islam.

The herald announced, "The bugle for *Jihâd* has been sounded, and all are invited to pick up their arms and belongings and bid farewell to their families and set out from their homes for *Jihâd*." The *Mujâhideen*

started to assemble at the office which was at once the centre for *Jihâd* and also the office and centre of the government of Islam - the Prophet's Mosque at Al-Madinah. Every single person was lit up by the fervour and passion of *Jihâd* and martyrdom. The streets of Al-Madinah looked extraordinarily busy with all the comings and goings of the *Mujâhideen*. The soldier-poet of the Banu Asad, Dharâr bin Azwar ﷺ, started to get ready and put on his armour and weapons. His sister Khawlah bint Azwar ﷺ asked him where he was going and which battle he was preparing for. He asked her, "Have you not heard of the announcement regarding *Jihâd*? I am leaving to fight in the *Jihâd* under the banner of our Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ." Khawlah asked plaintively, "Is it our fate that we should sit at home doing nothing? Dear brother you know that I am an expert archer; please ask *Amir-ul-Mo'mineen* Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ to allow me to take part in *Jihâd* side by side with you."

Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi ﷺ smiled when he heard the brave and courageous tones of his sister, filled with a passionate desire to take part in the *Jihâd*. He said, "May Allâh ﷺ Bless you with happiness; this is a war and not a game for women. You ought to stay at home, since my presence is enough to represent our family."

Khawlah رضي الله عنها replied, "Brother I will not allow you to go alone. You will just have to get permission from the Caliph for me. If you feel that this game of war is for men, then at least I can quench the thirst of the weary *Mujâhideen* and help to nurse the wounded. I can also revive your spirits when you are tired." On seeing the brave spirit and high morale of his sister, Dharâr ﷺ asked Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ to allow her to accompany the troops. Thus Khawlah رضي الله عنها got permission to take part in every battle that was fought between the army of Islam and the Romans.

On one occasion her brother, Dharâr ﷺ was imprisoned by the Romans. She astounded people with her experience, courage and daring and inflicted a fatal wound on the enemy in rescuing her brother. When she heard that her brother had been captured by the enemy, she swiftly put on her veil and picking up her sword hurried out of the tent. The other women asked her what she thought she was doing. Without bothering to answer them, she just dashed out of the

tent and into the ranks of the *Mujâhideen*. No one could identify this masked *Mujâhid*, who was creating such confusion among the ranks of the enemy. All the *Mujâhideen* started asking each other who this could possibly be, from which tribe he came and wondered why he was wearing a mask. The Commander-in-Chief, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ finally went near her and asked her, "Who are you and what is your name? Your actions in the cause of the *Jihâd* and the strength of your arms are truly praiseworthy." Then Khawlah answered through her veil that she was the sister of Dharâr ﷺ. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ was amazed that a woman had performed such feats in the battlefield. He asked her how this idea of entering the battlefield had come to her. She answered, "I was with the other women when I came to hear that my brother had been captured by the enemy. I just could not sit back doing nothing. So in order to rescue him I jumped into the fray." Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ prayed that Allâh ﷺ should reward her for her great exploits in the war.

Khawlah رضي الله عنها replied, "Commander, the reward I want is a plan to rescue my brother from the clutches of the enemy." Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ told her that he would not rest until her brother was rescued. Khawlah رضي الله عنها told him enthusiastically that she would play a major role in this enterprise as no one else could possibly have the same determination and concern as her.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ launched a very powerful attack on the Roman army and killed many of their soldiers, and captured quite a few. But they could not rescue the chieftain of Banu Asad, Dharâr ﷺ, neither could they find any trace of him. The whole day passed and night had fallen when a Muslim general came to the tent of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ and asked him what plans he had made for the rescue of Dharâr ﷺ.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ told him to bring into his presence the oldest of the Roman prisoners since he needed some information from him. When he was brought in to him, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ asked him about Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi ﷺ. The old man answered that since he did not know who this was he needed some mark of identification in order to be able to place him. Khawlah رضي الله عنها was called and asked to describe her brother's qualities. When she started talking about her brother's great attributes the aged prisoner asked if she

meant that brave warrior who had slain a great Roman General. If this was the man they were talking about, he was very much alive and in the custody of a Roman general, who had sent him to Hamas with a guard of a hundred soldiers.

Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ sent a troop of cavalry under the leadership of Râfi' bin 'Umairah to intercept this Roman caravan and try their utmost to get Dharâr ﷺ out of their clutches. Pursuing these people, Râfi' bin 'Umairah reached the city of Salmiyah. He asked the citizens if a caravan had passed that way. They answered that no caravan had passed through their city. Just as they were talking, they saw dust rising in the distance. The Muslim army turned its attention towards the approaching caravan. When they became sure that this was the caravan they had been looking for, with Dharâr bin Azwar ﷺ as prisoner, they raised the cry of *Allâho Akbar* and attacked the Romans. It was such a powerful attack that the Romans could not face it. The Muslim army fighting courageously rescued their hero, Dharâr bin Azwar ﷺ and reached the presence of Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ triumphantly. When Khawlah رضي الله عنها saw her brother alive and well her joy knew no bounds.

The army of Islam next marched towards Palestine and camped at the important city of Ajnâdain. It was here that the famous Battle of Ajnâdain was fought between the Roman and Muslim armies.



The siege of Damascus was still on when the great general Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ came to know that Emperor Herqal of Rome had marched at the head of a huge army to Ajnâdain and encamped there. His aim was to inflict irreparable harm and losses to the army of Islam. Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ consulted with his experienced and loyal colleagues to decide on the course of action to be taken. They advised that the siege of Damascus should be deferred and Emperor Herqal of Rome should be opposed and crushed first. Accepting their advice, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ ordered his troops to march towards the Palestinian border city of Ajnâdain, where the Romans were encamped. When the siege of Damascus was lifted and the army began to move out, the enemy took advantage of the situation to attack the Muslim army from the

rear. This assault from the back was totally unexpected and the Muslim army was taken by surprise. The Romans attacking from behind like a whirlwind, captured the women who were at the rear of the caravan and swiftly took them away. Among these women was Khawlah رضي الله عنها. She organized the women who were with her in getting hold of the poles of the tents. They broke open the skulls of the Roman guards. The courageous way in which these women defended themselves is a golden chapter in the annals of Islamic history. During this encounter with the Roman soldiers the women were reciting martial poetry and this increased their fervour astoundingly. They were beating up the Roman soldiers and reciting :

We are the girls of the tribes of Taba' and Hameer.

It is no great thing for us to put you to the sword.

In battle we are a flaming fire and you are in a great torture!

When Dharâr رضي الله عنه heard of the capture of the women, he and the other *Mujâhideen* attacked the enemy fiercely and started slaughtering them. The women were finally freed and all the *Mujâhideen* prostrated before Almighty Allâh in gratitude. The army of Islam now continued on its journey to Ajnâdain, the famous city of Syria, bordering Palestine. They met up with the army of the Roman Emperor which was encamped there. The Roman Emperor Herqal himself stayed at Hamas and sent a hundred thousand troops to Ajnâdain. The Muslim army faced them determinedly and defeated them. However, some of the famous Muslim generals were martyred in this battle. Among them were 'Ikrimah, Jarsha bin Hisham, Ya'am ܒن 'Abdullâh Al-Ba'doori, Hisham bin 'Aas bin Wa'il Al-Sa'ji, Fadhal bin 'Abbas bin 'Abdul Mutallib, Aban bin Sa'eed bin 'Aas and last but not least, Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi رضي الله عنه.

He entered the battlefield wearing a very strong armour made of iron and started putting the enemy to the sword in whichever direction he turned. Even the greatest of warriors was not able to face him. He killed the Roman general Rawân. All told, about fifty thousand Romans were killed. Then the Muslim army turned again towards Damascus, laid siege to it and within a short time gained control over it. After taking Ajnâdain and Damascus the Muslim army gained another notable victory at the Battle of Fahl.

Two battles were fought at Ajnâdain - in the year 10th Hijra and in the year 13th Hijrah. If we take it that Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi رض was martyred in the the later battle, then he must have fought in the Battles of Fahl and Yarmook. In any case, after accepting Islam Dharâr bin Azwar Asadi رض fought in every war, bravely and loyally risking his life at all times. His feats with all kinds of weapons, whether the sword or the spear were astounding and are the subject of a golden and glittering chapter in the history of Islam. All generals of Islam, of every day and age have drawn inspiration from his example and performed great and meritorious deeds in the field of *Jihâd*. And Insha' Allâh they will continue to do so in the future as well.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ

'Abdullâh bin 'Amr ﷺ says that one-day a lady brought a very expensive and exquisite sheet to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "I have made intention to present this to a member of a noble Arab family."

The Prophet ﷺ pointed towards Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ, and told her to gift it to him.

Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas



Self-respecting with head held high, he was a fearless *Mujâhid* whose exploits are the subject of a golden chapter in Islamic history. Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was quick-witted, wise, generous, sensitive, kind and soft-hearted. He was also extremely eloquent with a good command of the language. He was an illustrious leader who was just and dignified. He had been a wise and intelligent Governor of Kufah. As a warrior and General he was an experienced and glorious hero, the victor of Jarjan and Tibristan.

At the time when the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was only nine years old. His father was a very wealthy member of the tribe of Quraish and was known as the 'Master of the Crown.' When he wore a crown, no one else wore one, out of respect for him. This was because he was an excellent man and was held in such a degree of respect. No other was in a position superior to his. His father was famous as a skilled rider and was killed by 'Ali ﷺ in the Battle of Badr.

On one occasion 'Umar Farooq ﷺ told Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ:

"You are looking me as if I had killed your father. I did not do so; and even if I had done so, I would not have offered excuses for the act. It would have been justified because he was a disbeliever and associated others with the One True Allâh."

Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ answered him very calmly and courageously:

"O Caliph of believers, even if you had killed him you would have done the right thing since my father was on the side of Evil."

Islam had erased every kind of bias or bigotry based on ties of blood or tribal affiliations from the heart of Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ. He used to say:

"I am the son of Islam. I am proud to be a Muslim. But people generally pride themselves on tribal affiliations."

His mother was of a noble lineage both from her father's side as well as her mother's side. Her name was Umm Kulthum and she was the daughter of 'Abdullâh bin Qais bin 'Amr.

From his very childhood the heart of Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was irradiated by the light of Islam. Throughout his life his heart and his mind remained crystalline clear and pure, and his values were the values of Islam. During the caliphates of both Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما, he performed daring and heroic exploits in the fields of *Jihâd*. During the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ a committee was formed and given the task of compiling the Noble Qur'ân into one complete volume. Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was nominated a member of this committee. He used to recite the Noble Qur'ân with exactly the same intonation as the Prophet ﷺ. He had an excellent command of the language and spoke so eloquently that he held the hearers spellbound.

The writer, Rafiq Al-Adham in his book, *Ashîhar Al-Mashaheer Al-Islam Fi Harb wa Al-Siyasah* writes that when Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was asked to compete with 'Ali ﷺ, he asked:

"Do you wish to instigate quarrels among Muslims? If you kill 'Uthmân ﷺ, then I will certainly fight against you; if that is not the case then it is far better to sit at home than enter the battlefield. In my opinion it is better to adopt a policy of neutrality and not take sides in this internal conflict between them."

He said this and left for Makkah with Mughirah bin Shu'bah and other members of the Banu Hawazan tribe. He stayed in Makkah until the battles of Jaml and Safain with the consequent heartrending incidents were over. And he kept himself totally aloof from these tumultuous disagreements and feuds due to the fact that he was blessed with intelligence, wisdom and fear of Allâh.

During the rule of Amir Mu'âwiyah رضي الله عنه, Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas رضي الله عنه was appointed Governor of Al-Madinah. He was the brother-in-law of Marwân bin Hakam and was from the Abu 'Uthmân family. He was slightly built but sturdy and had a slightly tanned complexion. He was a patient and forbearing man under the most difficult conditions. He had a strong faith and faced the enemy in *Jihâd* very courageously. As a general he could inspire his men with his eloquent speeches. He was generous, brave and had strong faith, courage and wisdom.

The Arabs were well known for their thirst for revenge. Tribal feuds among them could be extended affairs and carry on for generations. Their wars caused the death of many members of the families involved. But Islam totally removed all feelings of ignorance, bigotry and prejudice from the heart of Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas رضي الله عنه. This is why he could tell 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه very frankly that even if he had killed his father he would have been in the right and his father in the wrong as he was a disbeliever and associated others with the One True Allâh. This astounding change in values and priorities was brought about in his personality by his love for Islam. Only a man who loved Allâh sincerely and whose heart was irradiated with love for Islam could have given such an answer in such a delicate situation. This is a moment which tests one's love and loyalties - loyalty to the One True Allâh or love for one's kith and kin - which is the paramount consideration?

Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas رضي الله عنه was an eloquent man who had command of the language and whose intonation and accent was exactly like that of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم. Great scholar Jahadî writes in his book, *Al-Bayan wa Al-Tabiyeen* that Sa'eed bin Musayyab was asked who had the best command of the Arabic language and he answered that the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم was the best. The person who questioned him said that he was not talking about the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم, but about the *Ummah* or followers of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم. Sa'eed bin Musayyab answered:

"Amir Mu'âwiyah and his son, Yazid, 'Amr bin Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas and his son 'Uthmân رضي الله عنهم."

'Abdullâh bin 'Amr رضي الله عنه says that one-day a lady brought a very expensive and exquisite sheet to the Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالم and said:

"I have made intention to present this to a member of a noble Arab family."

The Prophet ﷺ pointed towards Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ, and told her to gift it to him. This statement, coming as it did from the lips of the Prophet ﷺ was indeed a great tribute and one given to very fortunate people indeed.

Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was famed for his generosity. Every Friday he would invite a number of Companions for lunch and give them very expensive gifts. There are many incidents in his life which display his amazing magnanimity. There are very few people who would spread out a whole array of things before those in need and ask them to choose anything they pleased.

A man who was very learned in religious matters, was so needy that he was on the verge of starvation. His wife, a good woman, advised him to approach their governor, Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ, who was a very kind and generous man and describe to him their financial problems. She was sure that he would not return empty-handed. But the religious scholars of those days were very proud and did not like to ask for favours. His sense of honour and self-respect and his faith in Allâh ﷺ did not allow him to ask any other person for help. He preferred to die of hunger rather than ask another for alms or charity. His wife tried to persuade him saying that there was nothing shameful about it and the governor was always pleased to help the needy, and he would not have to face any embarrassment. Finally, to please his insistent wife he went to see Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ. When he was holding an audience with the citizens to discuss their needs or grievances. He sat at the back quietly as if he had been struck dumb. Finally everyone left, but he continued to sit silently. He was so uneasy that his throat was parched and he could not summon up courage to utter a word. The governor, Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ could sense his predicament and realized that he was feeling too embarrassed to speak. He asked the attendants to leave and turning to the scholar said:

"There is no one here except you and me; now you can tell me freely what it is you wish to say."

The scholar wanted to speak, but he just could not lift up his eyes; his courage failed him and the words seemed to get stuck in his throat. Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ got up and extinguished the lights and the room

was in total darkness. He said:

"Now tell me what you wish to say. There is no need to feel shy or embarrassed. You cannot even see my face now, so why are you feeling nervous?"

Finally, with great difficulty, the scholar said,

"We are starving since many days and nights. I was too ashamed to ask you for assistance and to talk about our helplessness to you."

Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ replied:

"Please meet the officer of the treasury and your work will be done."

When morning came the scholar went to the treasury and met the officer. He told him that he had received orders from the governor to give him something and asked him if he could bring some man to carry his things for him. The scholar answered that he did not have any such man and went home to his wife and scolded her, saying that the governor must have instructed his officer to provide him with some foodstuff. If he was planning to give him some money why would he need a man to carry it?

His wife told him:

"Don't worry whatever we get will be by the will of Allâh and we should submit to His Decision. *Insha'Allâh*, He will Provide for us. Since we are hungry even a bag of flour should be acceptable to us."

But the scholar refused to go to the treasury a second time.

Some time later the official from the treasury came to his house and told him:

"I told the Governor that you did not have anybody to help you. So he told me to take three slaves and place three bags containing ten thousand dirhams each on their heads and reach these to your house personally. So please accept this gift from the governor. These three slaves are also gifted to you, and they will serve you."

When the scholar saw this treatment meted out by the governor, Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ, to a scholar of religion, he was overwhelmed.

Another example of his generosity is seen in the incident involving a bedouin. The latter asked him for some financial help. He told his servant to give him five hundred as a gift. His servant did not understand his order and asked him if he meant five hundred dinars or five hundred dirhams. Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ answered that he had meant five hundred dirhams, but if the thought of giving five hundred dinars, then he should give five hundred dinars. The bedouin, clutching the huge amount, sat down right there and broke into tears. Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ was surprised to see this and asked him why he was crying, and if he had not got what he had expected. He answered:

"I am weeping because I am wondering how the earth will feel receiving such a generous and good man when he dies; how will the earth feel like feeding on you. You seem to me to be the incarnation of a great angel."

Sufyân bin 'Ainiyah narrates that when any person approached Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ for money, and he did not have any money on him, he would write a note and give it to the man. He would tell him to keep the note and bring it to him when he had money and claim it from him. Thus he became indebted for a very large sum. As a result his son, 'Amr bin Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas, had to sell his palace in order to pay off his debts. When he was on his death-bed he sent for his son, 'Amr ﷺ, and told him to go to Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ after his burial and give him the news of his death. If Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ offered to pay off his debts, he should not accept the offer. If he, 'Amr ﷺ, did not have enough money he should sell his palace in order to pay off the debts.

When Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas ﷺ passed away he was buried in Jannatul-Baqi'. His son in accordance with his last will, announced:

"If my father owes any money to anyone, please come and collect it from me."

After the burial, the obedient son set out for Syria; upon reaching there, he informed Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ about the passing away of his father.

Amir Mu'âwiyah was grieved to hear this news and asked if Sa'eed bin Al-'Aas had any debts. 'Amr answered that his father did owe money to people. Amir Mu'âwiyah asked him, how much? 'Amr replied that his debts were to the tune of three hundred thousand dirhams.

Amir Mu'âwiyah wanted to take over the responsibility of the debts. 'Amr refused saying that his father's last wish was that if he made such an offer it should not be accepted. However, he said, if he wished to buy the palace for the amount of three hundred thousand dirhams then he would be able to sell it to him and pay off his father's debts.

Amir Mu'âwiyah bought the palace for the said amount and sent it to Al-Madinah. The son then distributed the money to the debtors.

Among the debtors was a destitute and wretched person. He was carrying slap for twenty thousand dirhams. The son was really amazed to seeing, how his father owed this beggar such a huge amount. Then the beggar told him, One day I started walking along with your father on the street. He asked me:

"Why are you walking with me?"

I answered:

"I am a poor and destitute man. Having heard stories of your philanthropy and generosity I have come to ask for your help, so that I can be free of my needs. I depend on your generous nature to relieve my distress and do not think that you will disappoint me."

Hearing this he said:

"At present I do not have anything with me."

Then he wrote a promissory note for twenty thousand dirhams and handed it to me, saying that you could collect the amount a few days later from him. This is how I have come to claim the amount of twenty thousand dirhams from you.

After hearing the poor beggar's story the obedient son handed him the promised amount.

It was a great era in human history when people were so generous and their sons and heirs cared more deeply for a dead father's word of honour than for their share of inheritance. The least consideration was given to things worldly. Even angels could feel proud of the noble actions and integrity of character of these great Companions of the Prophet ﷺ.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

‘Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ

A great Companion and *Mujâhid* who took part in the Battle of Badr. When his sword was broken while fighting against disbelievers, the Prophet ﷺ gave him the branch of a date palm. He continued his attack on the enemy with this branch and in moments it became a sword. (*Historians*)

‘Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ

He is one of those seventy thousand fortunate people who will enter Paradise without any reckoning or process of accountability. He was a great Companion and *Mujâhid* who took part in the Battle of Badr. When his sword was broken while fighting against disbelievers, the Prophet ﷺ gave him the branch of a date palm. He continued his attack on the enemy with this branch and in moments it became a sword. This miraculous sword remained with him till the end of his life and he fought many a battle with it and shattered to pieces many enemies.

His sister, Umm Qais bint Mohsin narrated:

“My brother was very good-looking. He excelled by virtue of nobility of birth and was superior to others by virtue of knowledge and learning. He was also a great leader and ruler. When the Prophet ﷺ passed away he was twenty-four years old. He had taken part in the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud and other battles with great favor and enthusiasm. He displayed exceptional expertise in many wars.

The Prophet ﷺ declared that seventy thousand individuals from his *Ummah* would enter Paradise without any accounting. ‘Ukâshah was seated near him. He immediately asked if his name was also among them. The Prophet ﷺ answered that his name was among them. Another person, who was seated beside him, asked the same question. But the Prophet ﷺ said ‘Ukâshah had taken precedence over him.

After this revelation ‘Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ is quoted as an example of those who are superior to others in all fields. The words spoken by the Prophet ﷺ were a great honour and a source of pride and distinction for ‘Ukâshah ﷺ. It was an invaluable treasure, for to enter

Paradise without being answerable for one's deeds is the very peak of suspiciousness and good fortune. 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ was indeed a very fortunate man!

He was the son of Mohsin bin Harsân and was a scion of the Banu Asad tribe. Even before the migration of the Prophet ﷺ he had sworn allegiance to him in person. Then he had the honour of migrating to Al-Madinah.

He fought bravely and heroically in the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud and many other battles. This personification of beauty, both inward and outward spent his whole life for *Jihâd* and left unforgettable tales of heroism in the annals of military history. He is among some of the greatest Companions of the Prophet ﷺ.

On the way from Al-Madinah to Najad is Ghamar, which was under the control of the Banu Asad. It is a small place with a fresh water spring, hence has great value in the desert. Travelers often stopped here to take rest and drink the pure waters of this stream.

The Prophet ﷺ appointed 'Ukâshah ﷺ as the Commander of a small but loyal band of forty *Mujâhideen* to attack Ghamar. 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ led his small army of men very professionally, not allowing the enemy to stabilize themselves. They were taken by surprise at the sudden and swift advance of the *Mujâhideen*. Instead of facing them the Banu Asad fled leaving the spring and their livestock behind. The *Mujâhideen* got two hundred camels and some goats; and they took these to Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ was very happy that 'Ukâshah had shown such military and leadership skills in the very first enterprise entrusted to him.

In 6th Hijrah fourteen hundred Companions set out for Makkah with the Prophet ﷺ to perform '*Umrah*'. They were stopped at Hudaibiyah. Finally a treaty was concluded between the Prophet ﷺ and the Quraish of Makkah, which came to be known as the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ was one of these pure-hearted

Companions, who are described in the Noble Qur'ân in these words of Sûrah Al-Fath:

"Indeed Allâh was pleased with the believers when they gave the *Bai'ah* (pledge) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) under the tree: He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down *As-Sakînah* (calmness and tranquillity) upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory." (48:18)

'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ was the one of the '*Companions of the Tree*', and hence had gained the pleasure of Allâh ﷺ. And this is really the aim and object of a true picture of Muslim's life. It is indeed a great honour and blessing to hear in one's own lifetime the uplifting news that one has gained Reward of Paradise from Allâh ﷺ. They are indeed extremely favored people, who have been mentioned in the Noble Qur'ân. This is the very zenith and fulfillment of human existence. The life of 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ was enviable as he had the full confidence and trust of the Prophet ﷺ.

During the caliphate Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ subversion and perfidy had reached their peak. Instead of feeling upset and panicking, he displayed determination and courage and declared *Jihâd* against the apostates. In order to subdue these traitors he sent armies of *Mujâhideen* in various directions. The very famous and cunning boy of the Banu Asad tribe, Taleehah bin Khawaled Asadi declared that he was a prophet. Of the Arab tribes, Banu Tai and Banu Farâzah had united with the Banu Asad. The Prophet ﷺ had appointed Dharâr bin Azwar ﷺ, a brave and heroic warrior of the Banu Asad to suppress and overpower him. He showed his experience and valor in defeating Taleehah Asadi and his army. Taleehah, in an effort to save his life escaped to a place called Bazâkhah and took up residence there.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ ordered the great Muslim General Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ to suppress Taleehah and he set off for Bazâkhah. Khâlid ﷺ sent 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin and Thâbit bin Aqram رضي الله عنهما first to find the main route to the battlefield and check its condition. It so happened that Taleehah and his brother Salamah were riding in the area. Taking advantage of the opportunity they attacked 'Ukâshah

and Thâbit رضي الله عنهما. Salamah attacked the latter and martyred him. But 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ very daringly faced Taleehah bin Khawaled Asadi. But since Salamah was free after having killed Thâbit ﷺ, he came to the help of his brother. 'Ukâshah bin Mohsin ﷺ fought against both of them for a long time, but finally he too went on to meet his Creator in Paradise.

This incident had taken place before the Muslim army had reached the battlefield. When Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ saw the bodies of these two martyrs he was close to tears; he buried them in the same blood-soaked clothes and turned in fury to challenge the enemy. Taleehah's army faced a disgraceful defeat in the battlefield and he himself took to his heels.

He finally managed to find refuge in Syria. There he repented and embraced Islam again. From Syria he decided to proceed to Makkah for the purpose of performing '*Umrah*'. While he was passing Al-Madinah, a person who reported his intentions to the Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq spotted him. But caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ said he could not be prevented from performing '*Umrah*' since he had come back into the fold of Islam.

During the Caliphate of 'Umar Farooq ﷺ he wished to swear allegiance to him in person, but the Caliph was very angry with him. He told him:

"You have tortured Muslims."

Taleehah pleaded his case and said:

"Allâh ﷺ accepts the true repentance of a sinner; I wish to swear allegiance to you in person and find redemption for my past sins. Please be kind enough to give me this opportunity."

'Umar Farooq ﷺ finally agreed and his future was blessed because he had returned to the fold of Islam. If Allâh wishes to Blessed a person with True Faith no one else can stand in his way or deprive him.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

‘Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“O ‘Abdullâh! You should be delighted because a grand palace has been made for you in Paradise.”

'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ

'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ is one of the most brilliant stars in the firmament of Islam and a torch-bearer of the new religion. He was the son of Umaiyyah bint 'Abdul Mutallib, the aunt of the Prophet ﷺ. His sister was *Umm-ul-Mo'mineen* Zainab bint Jahash رضي الله عنها. He was a man of medium height with a sturdy well-built body and his thick hair framed a beautiful face. He had supreme patience and could bear up with hunger and thirst with great fortitude. He was one of them whom accept Islam first; the Prophet ﷺ had just sat in Dar-Argam when 'Abdullâh bin Jahash came in and swore allegiance to Islam.

According to one tradition, he was appointed as a General of the first Islamic troop. He also had the good fortune and distinction of being the first great Companion to receive the flag of Islam from the hands of the Prophet ﷺ himself and lead a band of the *Mujâhidîn*. He loved martyrdom more than this borrowed lifetime. In the battlefield of Uhud, he offered such a unique supplication, which moved the listeners deeply. This supplication was honoured. His *Ijtihâd* was proved by Allâh ﷺ regarding distribution of one-fifth spoils of war in the Noble Qur'ân. He was martyred in the Battle of Uhud and had the distinction of finding tranquillity and repose in the same grave as the Leader of the Martyrs, Amir Hamzah ؓ, the dearly beloved uncle of the Prophet ﷺ.

When the Prophet ﷺ saw his Companions being persecuted and tortured by the Quraish, he gave them permission to migrate to Al-Madinah. 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ decided to migrate and take his

whole family with him. It was not a difficult decision for him to leave behind a settled life in his hometown and resettle in a strange new place, since it was for the sake of Allâh. He had earlier migrated to Ethiopia as well with the first band of migrants, so really speaking it was not a unique experience. But this time round migration was on a larger scale, since all his family was to travel together.

When the family left Makkah for Al-Madinah the houses wore a forlorn deserted look. One day Abu Jahl and Shaibah visited these deserted grand palaces. They were surprised to see that the doors and windows had been left wide open and they were banging in the strong winds. It seemed as if no one had ever lived in them before. Abu Jahl took over the magnificent palace of 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ and started living there. When 'Abdullâh ﷺ heard this news he felt sorrowful that a disbeliever has occupying it. He asked the Prophet ﷺ:

"O Prophet! What has happened? The worst man in the creation of Allâh ﷺ has occupied my house."

When the Prophet ﷺ saw his distress he consoled him, saying:

"Would you not like it that Allâh make a beautiful and grand palace for you in Paradise?"

He answered:

"Why not O Prophet; if this happens then what greater happiness could I want?"

Then the Prophet ﷺ said:

"O 'Abdullâh! You should be delighted because a grand palace has been made for you in Paradise."

His pleasure and gratification knew no bounds. The news of a palace in Paradise, made one must be the very pinnacle and peak of perfection. Any Muslim could aspire such a thing to catch this honour. It is only natural that his heart started to dance with happiness. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were those fortunate people, who have sacrificed all for him and Islam. They heard such tidings of honour from him personally. The azure dome of the heavens could never have seen a more noble, honorable and self-respecting band of people

than the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. These are hallowed and sacred souls who have found honourable mention in the Book of Allâh Himself. The minor regret that 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ may have felt at the worst of men takeover his house and wealth. He was instantly changed into rapture on this thought. Doubtless the life of this world and all its trappings are transient and temporary. It is the life Hereafter that is Eternal and Everlasting and which belongs rightfully to the respected Companions. They were given the glad tidings of success not only in this world, but also in the life after death.

The Prophet ﷺ organized a military expedition in order to examine the movements of the Quraish of Makkah, and appointed 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ as the *Amir* or leader of the caravan. It consisted of twelve members and Sa'd bin abi Waqâs ﷺ was one of them. Addressing this group, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Today I am appointing a man as your leader, who is capable of bearing up with hunger and thirst better than any of you."

As he said this he handed the troop's flag to 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ. He also gave him a letter and told him:

"Open this letter and read it after you have travelled for two days and follow the instructions given in it."

The leader, 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ, opened the letter after two days as instructed by the Prophet ﷺ. The following was the text of the letter:

"When you read this letter do not stop, but keep on advancing until you reach Nakhlah, which is between Taif and Makkah. Set up camp at Nakhlah, and keep a very close watch on the Quraish. If you detect any unusual or dangerous movements inform me immediately."

When 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ read the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ, and told his companions:

"I have been ordered by the Prophet ﷺ to set up camp at Nakhlah and keep a watch on the movements of the Quraish. It is quite possible that our lives may be at risk, so those of you

who wish to attain martyrdom please accompany me. There may be some of you who value their life more than their mission; in case if they wish to go back, they can do so. No objections will be raised."

But every member of the group expressed a desire to obey the orders of the Prophet ﷺ. They said if they had a thousand lives they would sacrifice all of them for him, and would go with their Commander to Nakhlah as commanded by the Prophet ﷺ.

All the *Mujâhideen* advanced together and finally reached Nakhlah. They hide along the roadside so as to keep an eye on the Quraish. They saw a caravan consisting of four merchants with a lot of goods apparently on a trading mission. Among them were 'Amr bin Hadhrami, Hakam bin Keesân, 'Uthmân, and Nofil bin 'Abdullâh bin Mughairah.

They have two opinions about action to take. It was the last day of the sacred months when bloodshed is forbidden. If they killed these people during these days it would be wrong and cause a lot of unrest among the Arabs. If they gave them some respite, then these people would enter the limits of the Harâm. Once they were within the limits of the Ka'bah they would not be able to do anything at all. Finally, after a lot of thought and discussion they resolved to attack these people and kill them. As soon as they reached a final decision, they assaulted these traders. They killed one of them, and captured two others. The fourth member of the caravan managed to escape.

'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ and his companions reached Al-Madinah with the two prisoners and all the goods that had been taken. When they reached the presence of the Prophet ﷺ he expressed his displeasure at the action they had taken. He told them:

"I had not ordered you to take any such action. My instructions were to keep an eye on the movements of the Quraish and to keep me informed only."

He kept both the prisoners with him until he could reach a just decision regarding them. And he did not touch any of the captured goods.

When 'Abdullâh bin Jahash and his companions رضي الله عنهم saw the reaction of the Prophet ﷺ they became extremely nervous. They realized what a grievous error they had committed. They had actually disobeyed the command of the Prophet ﷺ and assaulted the trading caravan on their own initiative. They felt as if they had brought trouble on themselves; it was as if they had committed suicide by disobeying the express orders of the Prophet ﷺ. They were feeling shame and the behavior of other Companions. They had to face social ostracism as well as all the people refused to have anything to do with them since they had disobeyed their beloved Prophet ﷺ. They felt even more distressed when they came to know that the Quraish were taking advantage of this incident to avenge them on the Prophet ﷺ. They were carrying on propaganda among the tribes, saying that Muhammad ﷺ had declared the sacrosanct months to be months when the normal routine activities could be carried on. He had shed blood during the months, which all the Arabs held to be sacred; further, he had robbed and captured innocent traders.

One day as these *Mujâhideen* were sitting, grieved and desolate, a man came and congratulated them. He informed them that Allâh ﷺ had absolved them and had condoned their deed. He had revealed Verses of the Noble Qur'ân to the Prophet ﷺ exonerating them from guilt. They leapt with joy and all the Companions, embracing and congratulating each other, started reciting these Verses revealed in favor of their action.

"They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months, Say, 'Fighting therein is a great but a greater with Allâh is to prevent mankind from following the Way of Allâh, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to *Al-Masjid Al-Harâm* and to drive out its inhabitants, and *Al-Fitnah* is worse than killing.'" (2:217)

When these Verses were revealed the Prophet ﷺ was overjoyed. He took the goods which had been confiscated, released the two prisoners who had been captured. He then embraced and praised 'Abdullâh bin Jahash and the other *Mujâhideen*. This is considered to be the first military exploit in the history of Islam. It was the very first time that

spoils of battle were taken. It was also the first time that a small band of Muslim soldiers had killed an enemy of Islam, and taken two enemies prisoner.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqâs ﷺ relates a memorable incident from the life of 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ:

"When the Battle of Uhud was about to take place, 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ took me aside and asked me if I would not like to offer supplications to Allâh. I answered that of course I would like to do so and prayed thus: 'O Allâh ﷺ, Lord of the Worlds! When I enter the battlefield let me come face to face with an enemy who is a great and furious warrior. Let us both engage in a hand to hand fight and give me control over him until I finally overpower him completely. Then I should kill him and take away all his belongings.' 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ said 'Aameen' after I completed my prayer. Then he offered supplications to Allâh ﷺ thus: 'O Allâh please give me the ability to fight against an enemy who is a furious, brave and experienced warrior. I should fight only to gain your pleasure and blessings. Then he should succeed in overpowering me and cut off my nose and ears. When I come into Your presence on the Day of Judgment.' You should ask me, 'Abdullâh why were your ears and nose cut off?' Then I should answer you thus, 'For Your sake O Lord!' And You should say, 'You are absolutely right.'"

The supplication of 'Abdullâh bin Jahash ﷺ was much better than my, and Allâh ﷺ accepted it. In the evening I saw that he had been killed and the enemy had strung his ears and nose on a string. He achieved the honourable status of a martyr like his maternal uncle, Amir Hamzah.

The Prophet ﷺ buried both uncle and nephew in the same grave. As his tears fell on the grave it gave forth a sweet scent.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah



“‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah رض reached the court of Emperor Khosro Parvaiz clad in simple clothes which was the everyday dress of the Arab labourer, and displaying complete indifference to the pomp and show on display, started walking directly towards the throne. His faith gave him complete confidence and his heart was filled with reverence for Islam and love for Allâh. So all this grandeur of the Iranian Emperor meant nothing to him. ”

‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ

‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ had a pure soul and a sharp mind; pleasant, polite and well-spoken, eloquent in speech and brave in war, he was a risk-taker, who dared to talk boldly in the highest echelons of power. In the court of the most powerful super power of the age, he challenged the Roman Caesar to put him to death and finally he succeeded not only in getting away but also in getting the release of many of his Companions. This left the Roman senators stunned. Yet he had such a sense of humor that he could lighten the most somber moods and changes the atmosphere into one of lively laughter. Even the Prophet ﷺ used to enjoy his witty and humorous conversation greatly. On one occasion the Prophet ﷺ was describing to his Companions the horrors of the Day of Judgment. All the people assembled there were trembling with fear and weeping. When the Prophet ﷺ had finished, he asked if anyone had any questions. ‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ asked a very strange question. He said:

“O Prophet of Allâh ﷺ! Who is my father?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied:

“Hathâfah is your father.”

His mother, however, did not appreciate his sense of humor and got very annoyed with him. She expressed her disapproval of his behaviour and asked him:

“What kind of a question is that? Is that the question you should have asked the Prophet ﷺ? Don’t you know the identity of your father?”

'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ apologized to his mother very respectfully saying that he was only trying to lighten the atmosphere and everyone, including the Prophet ﷺ, had enjoyed his absurd sense of humour.

The Prophet ﷺ appointed him Commander of an army, which included many of his great Companions and sent him to fight a war. He gave him a letter and told him to open it when he encamped with his troops. The army camped in a field to rest. It was quite chilly, so the soldiers built a fire to ward off the cold and also to cook some food. As they were sitting around the fire, 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ opened the letter and read it. The Prophet ﷺ had urged the men to obey the orders of their Commander. When he read it, his innate sense of humour got the better of him. He read out the letter to all the men, and then asked them.

"Have I been appointed your Commander?"

They answered in chorus that he was. Then he asked them:

"Have you not been told to obey your Commander?"

Again they answered together:

"Yes, of course!"

Then he told the men:

"I order you all to jump into this fire!"

The men were stunned and started looking at each other. Some of them got up and got ready to leap into the fire. He quickly stepped forward and held their arms to prevent them from doing so. He told them,

"I was joking with you. The orders of your commander are always subject to the Commands of Allâh."

The Prophet ﷺ had given him this letter for the troops because he knew that he was known among the Companions as a jovial man. He feared that this pleasant light-hearted nature of his might weaken the unquestioning obedience which is due to a leader. This joke of his did amaze some of his Companions, who took it seriously, for a moment. They thought to themselves:

"We followed the path shown by the Prophet ﷺ in order to escape the fires of *Jahannum*, but here we are being asked by our leader to jump into this fire in the world itself!"

But when their General explained the point he had been trying to make, they all broke into smiles. Their worried frowns changed to smiles, and the sober and serious atmosphere lightened. When this army returned to Al-Madinah, 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ entered the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and narrated to him all that had taken place at the camp.

The Prophet ﷺ then commented:

By Allâh, if they had jumped into the fire, they could never ever have come out of it. The rule of obedience to the commander is applicable only in acts of virtue and goodness. Certainly the orders of a commander are subject to and subservient to the commandments of Allâh Almighty. When the commands of a leader are opposed to the commands of the Creator one cannot obey the temporal leader."

The chieftains of the Quraish tormented the newly converted Muslims who underwent great agony and suffering. Their naked bodies were branded with hot iron rods and they were made to lie down on burning fires and dragged naked across the sands of the burning desert. It was as humanity itself, wept at the excesses committed.

Some of the converts were deprived of their properties and palaces. The tortures inflicted on them reached the very utmost limits and became unendurable. And all this happened because they chose to follow their beloved Prophet ﷺ; they had rejected the false idols and gods of the Quraish and chosen to worship the One True Allâh.

When the misery and anguish suffered by his faithful Companions exceeded all limits the Prophet ﷺ ordered them to migrate towards Ethiopia. The Emperor Najâshi of Ethiopia was known for his kindness and his sense of justice. The Prophet ﷺ hoped that his people would be able to find some peace and have the freedom to follow their religion and their own way of life. 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ was among the first group of migrants who set out for Ethiopia.

When the Muslims in Ethiopia received the news that the Prophet ﷺ, weary of the oppression of the Quraish, had migrated to Al-Madinah, they became anxious to go there and be with him. Each of them had this priority now, to reach Al-Madinah as early as possible to see his radiant face and find peace in his company. They wanted to spend their days and night with him, this desire was dearer than life itself. Leaving behind the peaceful life at Ethiopia his loyal followers too started moving gradually to the new capital of Islam. The very axis of their love and life was now Al-Madinah, and they wanted to reach there as early as humanly possible. Among these people who migrated second time to Al-Madinah, was 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ.

In 6th Hijrah the Prophet ﷺ planned to send letters to the rulers of non-Arab countries through some of his chosen Companions. His aim was to attract them towards Islam and invite them to convert to this new humane religion. The Companions who set out on this mission were to visit distant lands. They knew nothing about the language, culture and customs of the people there. Neither did they have any knowledge about the etiquette and procedures followed in the courts of these emperors and Emperors. The revolutionary new concepts of equality of all in the sight of the One True Allâh would definitely act like a whiplash on their sensitive and proud natures. The arrogant pride of these all-powerful lords would have to be subjected to the Commands of Allâh ﷺ.

It was very clearly stated in the messages being sent by the Prophet ﷺ that their well-being lay in accepting Islam. If they did not do so their kingdoms would be in jeopardy. Their majesty, their royal thrones, their expensive robes of rustling silk, their rich jewels and gaudy robes and extravagant lifestyles would all be lost.

This was a very dangerous mission and the people embarking on it would be playing with their lives. No one knew how these royal arrogant personages would react to this unique Message. No one could predict how these ambassadors of the Prophet ﷺ would be treated. Since this was a very important move, the Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions to assemble together.

After reciting words in Praise of Allâh Almighty he said:

"I intend to send some Companions with an invitation to enter the fold of Islam to the rulers of non-Arab countries. Are you ready to embark on this enterprise?"

They all replied in unison:

"If we are honoured by such a mission, we are ready to obey your orders. We will go wherever you wish to send us. We feel happy that you have considered us worthy of doing this job and chosen us."

When he heard the answer of his faithful Companions, the Prophet ﷺ was very happy. He selected eight of them for the mission; one of them was 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah

He took the letter of the Prophet ﷺ for Emperor Khosro Parvaiz and set out for Iran. Hâtib bin Abu Balta' was chosen as the ambassador to the King of Egypt. 'Amr bin Umayyah Dhamari was sent to Ethiopia to Emperor Najâshi. Dahiyyah Kalbi was chosen as ambassador to Caesar of Rome. 'Alâ' bin 'Abdullâh Al-Hadhrâmi was sent to Manzar bin Sawi, the ruler of Bahrain. The ruler of Damascus was Hârith bin Abu Shamar Ghassâni and Shujâ' bin Wahab Asadi was sent to meet him. Saleet bin 'Amr was ambassador to Howthah bin 'Ali, the ruler of Yamâmah. 'Amr bin 'Aas was sent to the ruler of 'Oman. These great and respected Companions not only carried the Message of the Prophet ﷺ but went personally to their courts to gauge the reactions of the rulers for themselves.

'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah reached the court of Emperor Khosro Parvaiz clad in simple clothes which was the everyday dress of the Arab labourer. But his powerful personality shone through. His sturdy build, broad forehead and shining eyes revealed a brilliant mind. The Emperor of Iran had already been informed about his arrival. He arranged his court in grand style to impress this emissary of the Prophet ﷺ. But 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah, not in the least bit awed and displaying complete indifference to the pomp and show on display, started walking directly towards the throne. His faith gave him complete confidence and his heart was filled with reverence for

Islam and love for Allâh. So all this grandeur of the Iranian Emperor meant nothing to him.

When Emperor Khosro Parvaiz saw him walking so boldly towards him, he asked his attendant to take the letter from his hand. When the servant tried to obey his Emperor's orders and moved to take the letter from the hand of 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ he said:

"Move back! I have been ordered by the Prophet ﷺ to deliver the letter into the hands of the Emperor himself. I cannot disobey the instructions of my leader and guide."

When the Emperor heard this he told his attendant to allow him to approach the throne. He then handed the letter to the Emperor, who told his interpreter to translate it for him. These were the opening words of the letter:

"The Messenger of Allâh, Muhammad ﷺ brings greetings of peace to the Emperor of Iran. He deserves peace and tranquillity who follows the path of Truth."

Even as the Emperor heard the introductory words of the letter he turned to infuriate. His face turned red with anger and the veins on his neck stood out. He started shouting because the name of the Prophet ﷺ had taken precedence over his name in the letter. He took the letter as an insult and trembling with rage, snatched the letter from the interpreter and tore it up, without even finding out what was written in the rest of the letter. He shouted wrathfully:

"How did this man dare to write to me in this manner? Does he not know my power and my majesty?"

Then he ordered that this crude emissary should be thrown out of his court. 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ was thrown out of the court unceremoniously.

When 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ walked out of the court. He was quite unruffled, as he had done his duty. Lost in meditation, unaware and uncaring as to the reactions of the Emperor, immersed in the

beauty of the Verses of the Noble Qur'ân he was reciting in praise of Allâh ﷺ, he walked on. He was quite unaware of what fate had in store for him. Maybe he would be murdered or perhaps he would manage to get out of this alien land. Finally he called out:

"O Allâh the Magnificent! Now that I have delivered the letter of the Prophet ﷺ to the Emperor of Iran, I do not care how he will behave with me."

He got on to his camel and left. When the fury of the Emperor had abated somewhat he ordered his courtiers to bring the Arab emissary into his presence again. They searched for him everywhere, but he was nowhere to be found. They could get only this information that he had left the kingdom.

Meanwhile, 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ reached Al-Madinah and presented himself before the Prophet ﷺ. He told him of all that had taken place and how the Emperor had torn up his letter in a rage. The Prophet ﷺ was sad to hear this and offered a supplication to Allâh ﷺ, and said:

"May Allâh Almighty rip apart his robe of authority and power."

The Emperor of Iran ordered his governor in Yemen to capture the man in Hejaz who claimed to be a prophet and present him in his court. The governor of Yemen sent two of his noted generals to Al-Madinah with a letter for the Prophet ﷺ. The letter contained a royal command from the Emperor ordering the Prophet ﷺ to reach the court of the Emperor of Iran immediately with the two generals, as he had been summoned there. He was ordered not to delay obeying this order as it could prove harmful for him and he was told to present himself before the Emperor at his earliest convenience. Travelling post-haste these generals arrived to Tâ'if first. There they met some traders who belonged to the tribe of Quraish. They inquired where they could find this man by the name of Muhammad ﷺ, as they had been ordered to capture him and present him in the court of the Emperor of Iran. The traders told him that this man had settled in Yathrib and they could find him there. When the traders of the Quraish came to know that they were going to capture the Prophet ﷺ,

they were overjoyed. They traveled to Makkah and gave this great news to the chieftains of the Quraish:

"You can be happy now as your heart's desire is to be fulfilled. Now the Emperor of Iran and Muhammad ﷺ are opposing each other, and the representatives of the government of Iran are already in Yathrib to capture him. Now there is no fear of any further danger from him."

The representatives of the governor of Yemen, Bathān, reached Al-Madinah, met with the Prophet ﷺ and handing the letter of the Emperor to him and said:

"The Emperor of Iran has commanded our ruler Bathān to capture you and present you in his court. That is why we have come here. If you agree to what we have to say it will be better for you. If you refused to go with us, it will be bad for you. You know he is very powerful and can subdue you. His stranglehold is so strong that he will not let you off; he can destroy you and your people."

After listening to this man's childish boasting, the Prophet ﷺ smiled and said:

"You are our guest, why don't you rest tonight? We shall see tomorrow."

The next morning they got ready and came to see the Prophet ﷺ. They asked him:

"So, what do you say? What are your intentions? Are you ready to come to the Emperor of Iran of your own free will?"

The Prophet ﷺ answered with majestic wrath:

"Who is Emperor Khosro Parvaiz? Who is the Emperor of Iran? Listen carefully, what I have to say; he has been ruined and destroyed. His son has killed him."

The two generals were shocked to hear this news. They stared at the Prophet ﷺ in shocked disbelief. Finally they asked him:

"Is this the truth? Should we give this terrible news to Bathān?"

The Prophet ﷺ told them:

"Yes; this is the truth, and you can also inform him that the boundaries of the faith of Islam will soon spread to the kingdom of Khosro. If you enter into the fold of Islam, we will let you retain all that you possess. In other words, you will be able to retain control, and your kingdom will continue as it is at present."

After leaving the presence of the Prophet ﷺ the two generals went to Bathân and gave him the terrible news of the downfall of Emperor Khosro Parvaiz. When Bathân heard this news he said:

"If this proves to be true, it means that Muhammad ﷺ is definitely the True Prophet. But if it is proved to be false, you will just have to wait and see what decision will be taken regarding his future."

Just a few days later Bathân received a letter from Shairoyah, the son of Khosro Parvaiz. He had written:

"I have killed Khosro Parvaiz in order to avenge my people. During his reign he killed many noblemen. And besides this he raped their women and usurped their and properties and wealth. When this letter reaches you announce that they now owe allegiance to me. Until further instructions do not take any steps against the man about whom my father had written."

Bathân tossed away the letter from Shairoyah and converted to Islam. And with him all the people of Iranian origin residing in Yemen also entered the fold of Islam.

This is the interesting story of the meeting of 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ with the Emperor of Iran. Next he met Caesar of Rome. This occurred during the caliphate of 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ and it also makes strange but interesting reading.

In 19th Hijrah 'Umar bin Khattâb ﷺ sent an army of *Mujâhideen* to war. 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ was also a soldier in this army. The Roman

emperor was receiving regular news bulletins regarding the advance of this army. He knew that the Muslims were resolute and truthful people who would sacrifice their lives for Allâh ﷺ. He had told his armies that if they captured any Muslim alive they should bring the captive to his court. It was the will of Allâh ﷺ that 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ was taken prisoner. They took him to the court of Caesar and told him:

"We have brought a prisoner who is a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ and who was one of the first to accept Islam."

When 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ was brought before the Emperor of Rome, he gave him a penetrating look and said:

"I have a plan."

'Abdullâh ﷺ asked him:

"What is your plan?"

He replied:

"I invite you to convert to Christianity. If you do so, I will free you and treat you with all due respect."

'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ answered boldly and resolutely:

"This is absolutely impossible. I think it is a thousand times better to die than to accept your invitation."

The Emperor said:

"I think you are a brave man. If you accept my invitation, I am even ready to share the rule over my kingdom with you."

The shackled prisoner smiled and answered:

"By Allâh! You need have no hopes that I will turn against Islam for a moment, even if you give me your kingdom plus the whole of peninsula of Arabia!"

The Emperor was enraged and shouted that he would kill him.

'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ answered calmly:

"You can do whatever you please."

The Roman emperor ordered that he be put to death. He instructed that his feet should be fettered and he should be chained. Arrows were to be shot at him so as to pierce his palms. After this was done, Caesar again invited him - for a third time - to accept Christianity. Again 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ bluntly refused. Next Caesar ordered that the arrows be aimed near his feet. These instructions were also obeyed. Again, he was invited to become a Christian and again - for the fourth time - 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ refused to accept Christianity. Finally, Caesar ordered that a huge cauldron of oil be placed on a fire and 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ be brought down from the stake. When the oil started to boil, he ordered that two of the Muslim prisoners be brought. When they were presented before him, he ordered that one of them should be thrown into the boiling oil. The moment he was thrown in his flesh began to crackle and separate from his bones.

Again he turned his attention towards 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ and asked him:

"Even now you have a chance to accept Christianity."

But he refused him more forcefully than before. Caesar had no other choice now but to order that he too be thrown into the boiling cauldron. When he was brought near the oil, his eyes filled with tears and brimmed over. When Caesar's men saw this, they told him that the prisoner was crying. Caesar thought it must be due to sheer panic. Caesar said:

"Bring him to me."

When he was brought to Caesar, he again invited him to accept Christianity. But 'Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ refused again!

Surprised, Caesar asked, "Then why did you cry?" 'Abdullâh ﷺ replied:

"When I saw the scene I felt sorry that I had only one life. I wished that I had a thousand lives to sacrifice in your boiling cauldron for Allâh ﷺ."

Caesar was stunned momentarily into silence when he heard this. Finally he said:

“All right I will release you if you kiss my forehead.”

‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ asked him:

“Will you release the other Muslim prisoners as well?”

He says in his report of the incident that he was thinking to himself, it would not be too big a price to pay for the release of so many captured Muslims. Then approaching Caesar he kissed him on his forehead. Keeping to his promise, Caesar ordered that the prisoners be given into the custody of ‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ. As soon as he got his freedom, ‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ went to ‘Umar Khattâb ﷺ and narrated to him all that had happened. ‘Umar Khattâb ﷺ was very happy and said:

“Every Muslim owes a duty to ‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ and it is compulsory that each of us should kiss his forehead. I will kiss him first.”

Then he took the lead and kissed ‘Abdullâh bin Hathâfah ﷺ on his forehead.

“Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!” (89:28)

‘Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ

Prophet ﷺ supplication for his Companion ‘Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ:

“May Allâh ﷺ make the desire of obedience and submission to His commands and those of His Prophet ﷺ thrive in your heart.”

‘Abdullâh bin Rawâhah

‘Abdullâh bin Rawâhah  had the honour of taking part in the Battle of Badr and led the Muslim army in the Battle of Motah. When the Prophet  fought in the Battle of Saweq he was the vicegerent of the Prophet  and performed the duties of a Caliph. He led thirty *Mujâhdeen* and killed the famous Jew of Khaibar, Aseer bin Razâm. He used his best capabilities to fulfill the responsibility entrusted to him of which was the appraisal of the lands and resources of Khaibar. He displayed his excellent talents both during times of war and in the days of peace. He was uncle of Nu’mân bin Basheer  and the brother of Abu Dardâ’ 

“When he met any Companion he would tell him that they should make use of the opportunity to revive and renew their True Faith.”

On one such occasion, a companion got annoyed and complained about him to the Prophet , saying:

“O Prophet  may my parents be sacrificed for you! But this ‘Abdullâh bin Rawâhah , is a very strange character! He asks us to have faith in you for a little while. But we have accepted you for all time. How is it possible to that we have belief in you for just a short time?”

He smiled and answered:

“Don’t be so sensitive. The intentions of ‘Abdullâh bin Rawâhah

ﷺ are pure. May Allâh ﷺ Bless him with prosperity. It is just that he wants to gather people in a group in an environment and a milieu which even the angels may envy and take pride in."

The heart of 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ was filled to the brim with love, faith, and trustful obedience to the commands of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin Abu Lailâ ﷺ narrates what took place on one occasion when 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ was going to the Prophet's Mosque at Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ was delivering a sermon and 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ had just reached the door of the mosque, when the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Sit down." The moment the Prophet ﷺ said this, 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ stopped and immediately sat down among the shoes left at the door of the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ was delighted at the way his Companion at once obeyed his command. He was so happy that he offered a supplication to Allâh ﷺ:

"May Allâh ﷺ make the desire of obedience and submission to His commands and those of His Prophet ﷺ thrive in your heart."

This perfect degree of love and trustful obedience, is capable of rousing the envy of even the angels.

Once the Prophet ﷺ was riding on his camel to nurse and tend to Sa'd bin 'Ibâdah ﷺ who was ill. On the way 'Abdullâh bin Ubâbî, an arch enemy of Islam and a traitor was sitting with a group of his companions who were hypocrites and chatting with them. As the Prophet ﷺ was riding by he passed a rude comment just to hurt the feelings of the Prophet ﷺ. He said:

"Why is this dust being raised?"

'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ was also present there and he could not bear it that anyone should comment thus on his beloved Prophet ﷺ. He immediately welcomed the Prophet ﷺ affectionately and reverentially, saying:

“May our parents be sacrificed for you O Messenger of Allâh. We are blessed by your coming here. Just a look at your radiant face is like being blessed with an immeasurable treasure. And your words of wisdom inspired and purified by the sacred waters of Zamzam and the Kauther of Paradise are great blessings for us. The sweet fragrance of your presence perfumes the whole atmosphere of Al-Madinah. Your word is our command.”

Actually this was a fitting retort directed by 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ in reply to the devilish ill-feelings expressed by 'Abdullâh bin Abi. It was meant to wound and agitate this enemy of Islam by making him realize the depth and intensity of the love and admiration that people nurtured in their hearts for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ cared very deeply for 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ in return for the regard and love that he always felt and expressed for him.

Once 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ was taken ill; his condition was so serious that he went into a coma. When the Prophet ﷺ came to know of this he immediately went to see him. When he saw him unconscious he offered the following supplication to Allâh Almighty:

“O Allâh ﷺ! If it is ordained that he should die, please make it easy for him. If it is ordained that he should live please heal him and cure him.”

The moment his supplication was completed 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ opened his eyes and when they fell on his beloved Prophet ﷺ, who was seated near him, his illness seemed to be disappear.

'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ always tried to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ as far as possible in all matters, however difficult or arduous he may have found it. His brother, Abu Darda'a ﷺ, narrates that whenever they traveled with the Prophet ﷺ, even in the most terrible of summers, the Prophet ﷺ, and with him 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ would be the only ones fasting among those who were in the caravan.

His zeal and ardour in worship and prayer was worth seeing. Whenever he went out of the house and whenever he entered it, he

would offer two units of supererogatory prayer. This is an excellent practice to gains nearness to Allâh. And people who devote their whole lives to gaining the pleasure of Allâh Almighty have always tried to offer as many supererogatory prayers as possible to be near Allâh as often as possible. It is in the act of prostration and prayer that one is closest to Him. A person's humility and supplications and praises of the Almighty in this posture of lowness takes him to the highest position in the Heavens. The angels talk about him and they look at his piety with envy. It seems as if the whole of creation prays for this person and the Help and Assistance of Allâh Almighty is always with him and he is blessed with Victory by Him.

Besides being an exceptional calligrapher, 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ was an excellent poet who was very well-known throughout the Arab world. 'Urwah bin Zubair ﷺ narrates the reaction of some of the poets when the following verse of the Noble Qur'ân was revealed:

"As for the Poets, the erring ones follow them." (26: 224)

'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ, Hassân bin Thabit ﷺ and Ka'b bin Malik ﷺ started weeping. Their tears were flowing and they were saying:

"Alas! We are destroyed. We are among those who are censured in the Noble Qur'ân. What will happen to us now? We wish that we had not had even the remotest connection with poetry."

Taking pity on their mourning and weeping, Allâh ﷺ revealed the following Verse:

Except for those who have believe in Allâh and do good deeds.

In other words the true Muslims and poets who do good deeds are exempt from this criticism and censure. After listening to this Verse the three poets were relieved and felt a sense of tranquillity and peace. A shining radiant happiness replaced the sadness in their eyes, and their sorrowing hearts began to sing paeans of joy. Then they directed their creative energies to writing beautiful inspiring verses for the defense of Islam. During the construction of the Prophet's Mosque,

while carrying cement and bricks, they sang the following well-known and popular couplet written by 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah رض again and again.

O Allâh! The real life is the life of the Hereafter
Please forgive the *Ansâr* and the *Muhâjir*

The atmosphere was joyful with the Companions humming this couplet as they busied themselves, constructing the Prophet's Mosque. The Prophet ﷺ was reciting this verse loudly and delighting in offering this supplication to Allâh. This in itself was proof of the excellence and worth of poetry, which inspired people to perform good deeds. The work of good and great poets is always recited and enjoyed by righteous people.

Ans bin Malik رض narrates that when the Prophet ﷺ went to Makkah to perform his '*Umrahtul-Qaza*', 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah رض, was holding the reins and reciting the following verses:

O children of the disbelievers give way to our Prophet ﷺ
On his arrival today we will hit you in a way
Which will separate your heads from your bodies
And the dearest of friends will forget each other.

When 'Umar Khattâb رض heard these verses he told 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah رض:

"Son of Rawâhahh, it is not appropriated to recite such verses in a sacred place in the presence of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."

When the Prophet ﷺ heard him he said:

"O 'Umar! Let him be and do his job. I swear by Allâh Who has control over my life that these words of 'Abdullâh are inflicting wounds in the hearts of the *kuffâr*, deeper than those inflicted by spears. His verses are piercing their bodies like arrows and drilling holes in them. These are not words but arrows raining down from the bow of an archer."

¹ Performed by the Prophet ﷺ since, he had not been allowed by the Quraish to enter Makkah. After the treaty of Hudaibiyah was signed it was agreed.

What greater accolade or acclaim could the inspiring verses of 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ, receive? Qais bin Hâzam ﷺ says that the Prophet ﷺ once said:

"'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ, warm up the hearts of your comrades with fresh verses and create a revolution in their minds."

He answered that he had given up writing poetry.

'Umar Khattâb رضي الله عنه was standing next to him and told him angrily:

"Listen! Obey the Prophet ﷺ."

As soon as he heard this 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ, started reciting the following verses:

By Allâh! If He was not with us, we could not be on the right path

We would not have given charity or prayed. Allâh! Please bestow peace on us.

O Allâh! Please keep us steadfast when we battle with the enemy!

The enemy has been cruel but we do not cow down to his mischief-making.

One day his wife was grumbling to her slave girl about his sexual impure. He told her that cannot read the Words of Allâh. Then he came out spontaneously with this line:

I bear witness that the Promise of the Almighty is true

Jahannum is the ultimate home of disbelievers.

After that he recited another verse with the same metrical and rhyme:

Certainly the Throne of Allâh ﷺ is floating on water

And He is seated on his Throne in all His Majesty

The angels bear the Throne of Allâh ﷺ

And these angels of Allâh ﷺ are honoured and near to Him.

When 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ, narrated to the Prophet ﷺ what his wife had said and what he had recited, he smiled and appreciated it.



The Prophet ﷺ organized the Muslim army, which left for Syria, border town of Motah, and appointed three Commanders-in-Chief and said:

"The first Commander-in-Chief is Zaid bin Hârithah رضي الله عنه; in case he is martyred, then Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib رضي الله عنه should take his place; in the event, he also being martyred, 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah رضي الله عنه, should take Command."

After they received their orders from the Prophet ﷺ, the *Mujâhideen* set out carrying with them the good wishes and prayers of the people of Al-Madinah. On this occasion 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah رضي الله عنه, spontaneously recited the following verses:

I beg Allâh for Divine Forgiveness
 And I pray for a sharp sword
 Which will spurt foam from blood
 And I pray for a sharp spear
 Which can pierce through the enemy's hearts.
 I desire that people should say
 When they pass by my grave
 Allâh showed him the path of a true conqueror.

The *Mujâhideen* camped at Motah and saw that the Emperor Herqal of Rome had come to do battle with a hundred thousand troops. Some of them, realizing the danger suggested:

"We should inform the Prophet ﷺ that the battle is going to be a very tough one and that the Roman Emperor has arrived with a huge army of one hundred thousand men, whereas there are only three thousand of us. We should then act according to the instructions we receive from the Prophet ﷺ."

'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah رضي الله عنه, gauging the situation said:

"My friends, why are you panicking? Paradise awaits you. This is a golden chance to gain the noble and lofty position of a martyr. When we step into the battlefield of *Jihâd* we should not

look at the inadequacy or excess of numbers. We have come here with an aspiration for martyrdom and for the exaltation of our religion. Islam has given us honour and eminence. We should leap into the fray without worrying about the consequences. Whatever the result it will be in our favour. If we die we shall achieve martyrdom, if we survive we will be *Ghâzi* or conquerors of the infidels."

His electrifying speech inspired the *Mujâhideen* who entered the battlefield ready to risk their lives and untroubled by the fear of death. Fierce fighting ensued and the Commander-in-Chief, Zaid bin Hârithah \ddagger was martyred fighting valiantly. The flag of Islam now went into the hands of Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib \ddagger . He also went on life-eternal fighting courageously. 'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah \ddagger moved forward and picked up the flag. As he took over command of the army, he was reciting the following verses:

I swear O soul! You have to enter the battlefield
 Either willingly or reluctantly.
 What if some people gather and shout
 What is this I see that you are averse to entering Paradise?
 No doubt you have lived for long in peace and tranquillity,
 Were you not a lowly drop of water in the womb?
 And at the same time he was admonishing himself.
 O soul, even if you are not killed, you will die
 And you will meet this Bird of Death.
 What you wished for has been bestowed on you
 If you can do what your martyrs have done
 You will be on the Right Path.
 But if you fail and avoid stepping into the battlefield
 Then your fate will be tragic indeed!

Reciting these verses he advanced and fighting as if possessed he met the fate of a fearless martyr. Thâbit bin Aqram took the flag of Islam and handed it to Khâlid bin Waleed \ddagger , with these words:

"Now it is only you who have the capability to bring this ship

out of the whirlpool of grief to safety. Please assume command; in my opinion no one else has God-given skills and abilities than you. All of us unanimously accept you as our Commander."

Discharging his duties as Commander-in-Chief, Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ, achieved something unique in military history, which left the experts astounded. In the face of one hundred thousand fully armed enemy troops he saved the lives of his small army of three thousand men and brought them back to safety. In recognition of this great achievement, the Prophet ﷺ give Khâlid bin Waleed ﷺ the title of 'Saifullâh' (Sword of Allâh).

'Abdullâh bin Rawâhah ﷺ was a great General of the Muslim forces and was a poet of the highest rank. His poetry was appreciated and recited by the Prophet ﷺ himself.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)

‘Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ

“I am sending a fresh army of four thousand *Mujâhideen* under four generals to help you. Among these is a general who by himself is equal to a thousand soldiers.”

‘Ubâdah bin Sâmit

‘Ubâdah bin Sâmit  was a member of the Khazraj tribe of Al-Madinah. He was the beloved son of Sâmit bin Qais Khazrji and Quratul-‘Âain bint ‘Ubâdah. He was also the Islamic-brother of Abu Marthad Ghanwi . He had the distinction of coming Makkah before the migration of the Prophet  to Al-Madinah in order to accept Islam and swear allegiance to the Prophet .

He took part in the Battle of Badr and reached the highest status possible for a human being. He was also among those who swore fealty to the Prophet  in the *Bai’at Ridhwân* thus gaining the Pleasure of Allâh . He played a very important part in the conquest of Egypt. An experienced, daring and brave General, ‘Ubâdah bin Sâmit  was the ambassador of the Muslim army in the court of the King of Egypt, Maqooqas. Caliph ‘Umar Farooq  appointed him as the first *Qâdhi* of Islam to the state of Palestine. His work in the establishment of courts of law and in the dispensation of justice here was invaluable.

He was forthright and candid in the propagation of Islam when he met with Amir Mu’âwiyah  in Syria. He was an eloquent orator. He was fortunate enough to be appointed by the Prophet  to teach the Noble Qur’ân to the Companions of *Suffah*. He was a man who practiced abstinence and gave himself to fasting during the day and praying at night, who feared Allâh  and prayed for Divine Forgiveness. He tried his utmost to obey the Commands of Allâh Almighty and follow the example set by the Prophet . He hated disobedience and sin and viewed with disgust worldly attractions, devilish temptations and false idols, which distracted or diverted him from following the injunction laid down by Allâh.

He was a *Mujâhid* whose only ambition in life was to attain martyrdom, and whose achievements deserve a golden chapter in the history of Islam. His experience and skill and fervour was elicited the tribute paid by 'Umar Farooq ﷺ, that he was equal to a thousand enemy warriors.

'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ had the honour of being with the Prophet ﷺ at all times, in war and peace, in prosperity and adversity. He rode with the Prophet ﷺ in all the battles that he fought. He was instrumental in making ineffective the plots and machinations of the hypocrites and the Jews who tried their utmost to create rifts between the Muslims. He also played a very prominent role in every sphere in destroying the rebels, traitors and conspirators, who had reared their heads against Islam.

During the whole of his life he loved fighting in *Jihâd*. And his life's mission was to teach the Noble Qur'ân and spread knowledge about its injunctions. During the caliphate of 'Umar Farooq ﷺ, Yazid bin Abu Sufiyân ﷺ wrote that there was a great need for experienced teachers of the Qur'ân for the people of Syria. The Caliph then sent Mu'âth bin Jabl, Abu Darda' and 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit رضي الله عنهم to Syria. The latter played an outstanding role in the victory at Tartos. When Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah planned to lead the army and attack the enemy at Lâthqiah, 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ was designated by him to govern during his absence. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ appointed him *Qadhi* of Palestine. When the first Islamic courts were set up during the caliphate of 'Umar Farooq ﷺ he was the first Companion to be entrusted with the very momentous and exacting task of dispensing justice in the Supreme Court.

The Prophet ﷺ appointed him at various times and at various places to collect the money accruing from 'Zakât' and *Sadqah* (charity). He advised him thus:

"Always fear Allâh. Do not ever use anything collected for the *Baitul-Mâl* for your personal needs. Remember! If you do so, these very things will complain and bear witness against you on the Day of Judgment."

'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ started trembling, when he heard these words of advice and almost on the verge of tears and said:

"I do not wish to be appointed leader of even two men and I do not want to bear the responsibility of any material goods or money of the Muslim *Ummah*."

During the caliphate of 'Umar Farooq ﷺ the Muslim army was sent to conquer Egypt under the command of 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ. When he reached Egypt he saw that a huge well-armed contingent of the enemy was already in the battlefield. When he realized the critical nature of the situation 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ asked the Caliph for reinforcements.

'Umar Farooq ﷺ arranged for an army of four thousand *Mujâhideen* and sent them to Egypt. He appointed four generals to organize these fresh troops. Each general was responsible for a thousand men. One of these generals was 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ. 'Umar Farooq ﷺ wrote to 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ:

"I am sending a fresh army of four thousand *Mujâhideen* under four generals to help you. Among these is a general who by himself is equal to a thousand soldiers."

The Muslim army was encamped in the field. The King of Egypt, Maqooqas, sent some spies to gauge the strength of the enemy and study the actual state of affairs. They disguised themselves and sneaked into the ranks of the Muslims and became friendly with them. After studying their tactics they gave the following report to the King:

"Your Majesty! We have seen a people who love death more than their lives. They prefer modesty and humility to arrogance and pomp. They are indifferent to the world and its trappings. They sit on their haunches when they eat. All of them dress in similar simple robes, and they all look the same. A stranger cannot differentiate between the ruler and the ruled. When they have time to pray, they wash certain parts of their body, and then they form rows to stand in prayer. And when they pray it is as if they have nothing to do with the world at all. It is a sight worth seeing when they prostrate themselves before their

Maker and beg Him and plead with him. The way they stand in prayer, folding their hands across their bosoms is unique. And when they bend low and then prostrate themselves, it is a sight worth seeing. When they stand in communal prayer, one person stands in front and leads the prayers. And all of them stand behind him in rows and follow his lead. When he stands they stand, when he bend they bend and when he prostrates, they prostrate all together! We have never seen this kind of organized discipline and obedience to the leader. Their faces appear radiant; they seem like a new race upon this earth."

When the Emperor of Egypt heard all this he was stunned. After thinking over the matter for some time he said:

"If these people are in reality such as you have described them to be, then it is certain we cannot oppose them or compare with them. Even the tallest of mountains cannot place obstacles in their path. The best thing for us to do would be to forget about fighting with them and extend the hand of friendship and peace. In my opinion if we lose this chance to make peace, we would have lost a golden opportunity. Once they gain control over the golden lands watered by the Nile, we will never be able to get them back. If they establish themselves in our beloved land, we will never be able to oust them. We should have formal negotiations with them; perhaps this will provide us with a better option."

Turning to his courtiers he said in his proud regal manner, "Tell me what you think I should do at this moment of crisis. Do you think my appraisal of the risks is well-founded? "The courtiers obediently answered in chorus," Of course Your Highness, your ideas are always correct. Your will is our command. Please order us and we are just waiting for a sign from you. Every single person among us is with you and will not budge an inch without receiving our orders from you."

The King of Egypt said:

"Before taking any action I wish to meet a representative delegation from the Muslim army and listen to what they have to say. I also wish to tell them about my power and majesty and

about my resources, powers and military capacity. Maybe our overpowering strength will frighten them and they will give up the idea of going to war with us. Thus we will be saved from falling prey to fresh misadventures and hardships."

They all agreed with him abjectly, praising him to the heavens.

In a thundering regal tone, the King ordered his messenger to carry his message to the commander of the Muslim forces saying that he wished to meet him. The messenger bowed low and said he would be happy to carry out his orders immediately. When he went to Commander-in-Chief 'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ he said:

"Their King wished to meet him at once, and he would be grateful if he would accompany him."

'Amr bin 'Aas ﷺ arranged for a representative delegation and appointed 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ the leader. He told the members of the delegation to accompany the King's messenger. He told them to obey their leader implicitly and strictly forbade anyone other than the leader to speak to the King.

When this delegation reached the court of the King of Egypt, 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ was in the forefront leading them with great dignity. As he advanced towards the throne, the King watched him with amazement. The leader, 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ, was a tall man with a wheat complexion and had a very charismatic personality. The King was impressed with him, but did not want to show it.

In order to hide his real emotions of embarrassment and dismay, he tried to put on a blustering exhibition of childish peevishness. He thundered:

"You should send some handsome and royal person to talk to me. This man is dark and very ordinarily dressed. It is beneath my dignity to speak to such a person."

His arrogant display of sound and thunder was actually meant to conceal his fear and nervousness.

After hearing the cowardly bluster of the King, the whole delegation answered simultaneously:

"Your Royal Highness, our Commander-in-chief has nominated him leader of the delegation. In intelligence and wisdom, in understanding and insight he is the best among us. In his presence not one among us will talk to you. In comparison to him we are inexperienced. No one is his equal in the eloquence and speech. We all owe obedience to him; you have to talk to him and only him. Tell him, what do you want to say and he will answer what he wishes."

The King of Egypt, Maqooqash said:

"It is really astonishing; how did you all agree to accept him as your leader. He looks like a very ordinary man."

Actually the King was trying albeit unsuccessfully to influence them psychologically. 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ, meanwhile was examining his face and observing his childish tantrums smiling calmly. The King finally realized that he had failed in all his attempts, to influence any of the members of the delegation and said reluctantly:

"All right if you have all decided unanimously then who am I to object. Come here, come nearer to me, but talk to me in a gentle tone. Don't use a rough tone as your face. Your harsh and rough voice may affect my heart."

'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ smiled and answered him in a dignified manner:

"Your Royal Highness, if you are so terrified just by looking at me, how will you feel when you see those thousand young warriors who are under my command? Your insides will turn to water! Your Royal Highness this delicacy of temperament does not suit your royal status. It would not be wise to use these delicate hands to do battle with the paws of lions. You are speaking to me in a thunderous tone again. Please try to understand what I am trying to tell you. I will not be in the least bit scared or thrown into panic if even a hundred of your soldiers come to battle with me. And listen to me carefully. *Jihâd* is our beloved pursuit and our aim is to achieve martyrdom. We do not come to the battlefield to gain worldly and material things. Our eyes are set on a greater goal, the exaltation of the

True religion of Allâh. We live only to spread the Sacred Name of Allâh Almighty."

Pay attention to what I have to say. If you place even a pile of the treasures of the world before us and beside it a mound of earth, in our eyes both would be of equal value. Each of us needs just enough food to keep us going for a day and a night. We have never desired to amass wealth. We need just enough cloth to cover our bodies. If any one of us should happen to find a huge stockpile of gold, we would spend it in a moment for the sake of Allâh, and we would keep just enough to fill our stomachs."

The King of Egypt, Maqooqas, listened this daring and moving speech of 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit very intently and then whispered to his Minister:

"Did you note the dignified style? And how well he expresses himself? Just look at his magnificence and grandeur! And just look at his simple living and high thinking!"

Then he turned his attention to 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit and with a frustrated and embarrassed air said to him:

"O 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit! Do you realize the extent of our resources? Our army is fully equipped and armed. And fresh reinforcements have arrived from Rome to help us. It is beyond your feeble powers to oppose us. It will be better for you to escape from here with your lives. I am counseling you for your own good. If you do not heed my advice, you will suffer such grievous harm in this battle that you will not be able to recover. I am your well-wisher and sympathize with you. I have sent for you in order to warn you in advance of the risks involved and the total ruin facing you. The Egyptian forces and their Roman allies are already in the battlefield and they are fully armed. If you go ahead with your plans you will repent your decision. You still have time; make the right decision and I will control my army and prevent them from advancing on you."

Instead of striking terror into the heart of 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit with this insulting and demeaning speech, the King only succeeded in increasing his enthusiasm and ardour. He answered:

"O king of Egypt seated on your rich and ornate velvet throne and leading a life of luxury and ease, do not fall prey to any misconceptions. Even if another army equal to this comes to oppose us it will not frighten us. You should realize that our only ambition is to achieve our goal of martyrdom. Death is dearer to us than life in *Jihâd* and our life is a gift, which we would like to present to Allâh, in obedience to His Commands. We do not carry a lurking desire to return to our homes when we set out for *Jihâd*. Allâh Almighty Himself Keeps our homes and our families. O King of Egypt! You are looking only at our outward appearance and feeling sorry for us. You ought to understand that we are very well. We are proud of our good fortune and we are not greedy or avaricious for more riches of this transient world. If any of us gets a lot of wealth he spends it in the way of Allâh  and finds great pleasure in doing so. He does not find peace until he has got rid of the riches he has gained. Instead of pitying us, you should worry about the throne on which you are seated and which is making you think in this manner."

Our only message to you is to ask you to accept Islam. This is the only way you can retain your position as King of Egypt. Nobody will challenge your present powers. If you do not wish to accept Islam then you have to pay *Jizyah* and the protection of your life and your kingdom will be our responsibility. In case you do not choose either of these options, then we will have to engage in a war to decide your fate. You consult with your people and let us know what you have decided. This is essentially the message that our Commander-in-Chief has asked me to convey to you. And our Caliph, 'Umar Farooq , who in turn had been Commanded by the Prophet , instructed him to convey the same message to all the rulers of the various countries of the world."

Thus, 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit , fulfilled his duties as an ambassador in the court of Maqooqas, the King of Egypt, with daring and courage and in a manner which inspired faith.

Actually it was a very quick-witted and adroit psychological war that

he was carrying out and he succeeded in astounding the courtiers. In modern warfare too such psychological weapons are used to great advantage in plunging the enemy into a panic mode and undermining his morale. Today the enemy deploys spies and agents in disguise in order to spread rumours and gain dominance over the mind of the adversary. Once this is achieved the enemy cannot fight to his full potential. This was the miraculous achievement of the Prophet ﷺ that his Companions had learnt to dominate over the mind of the enemy with ease, consummate skill, wisdom and an understanding of the workings of the human mind.

This cold war was still on between the two sides, when 'Amr bin 'Aas رضي الله عنهما got a letter from Caliph 'Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما expressing his displeasure at the inordinate delay in conquering Egypt, he asked:

"Why has not been launched an attack on Egypt? I am wondering that the *Mujâhideen* have too become enamoured the attractions of the world like the disbelievers. Look into your hearts and examine your motives. Sincerity should always adorn your hearts since it is the blessing, which turns tide of battles into victories on all fronts. I have sent four generals, each of whom is equal to a thousand enemy soldiers. Then why has not Egypt been conquered? When you receive this letter please read it out in front of all the *Mujâhideen* and inspire them with the spirit of *Jihâd*. Command them to advance without any further delay. In the field of action the secret of success and triumph is hidden in the ability to sacrifice and advance first in order to preempt enemy action."

The Commander-in-Chief, 'Amr bin 'Aas رضي الله عنهما, obeying the orders of the Caliph read out his letter to the troops. He then gave the responsibility of attacking Alexandria to 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit رضي الله عنهما. He launched such a powerful offensive that the enemy panicked and finally suffered an ignominious defeat. Thus Alexandria was taken in the very first encounter. 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit رضي الله عنهما used to take precautionary measures, which were so innovative that they used to astound observers. On one battlefield he ordered the army to dig huge deep

trenches where the rider and the horses could be hidden from the enemy's view. This move ensured the safety of both the rider and horse; an added advantage was that the enemy could be easily deceived about the strength of the Muslim army.

In modern warfare too deep trenches are of basic importance; military equipment of a sensitive nature and important military personnel also find the best possible security in such trenches. Today these kinds of measures are considered to be of prime importance; in fact even civilians are asked to take refuge in trenches. This innovation of the great general and companion of the Prophet ﷺ, 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ, became so popular, that it has been used in every age and time to great advantage.



'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ was daring and courageous enough to say what he believed to be true and just. Once in the central mosque of Damascus, the call to Friday prayers was given and the preacher sat on the pulpit to deliver the Friday sermon. Amir Muawiya ﷺ was present and the preacher after uttering some words in praise of Allâh Almighty started praising him. 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ did not like his attitude at all and picking up some mud he threw it into the face of the preacher. Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ did not approve of this action and rebuked him. Without a moment's hesitation he said to him:

"Do you not remember the time when we were with the Prophet ﷺ and swore allegiance to Islam? On that occasion we had sworn that we would propagate the Truth all the times and follow all the precepts of the Prophet ﷺ."

Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ said that he certainly remembered that occasion. Then 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ said:

"Did not the Prophet ﷺ said that when we saw someone extolling the virtues of a person to his face we should throw mud on his face?"

Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ silenced on hearing this *Hadith*.

One day Amir Muawiya ﷺ was very annoyed with 'Ubâdah bin

Sâmit ﷺ and ordered him to quit Damascus. He left and went to Al-Madinah. When Caliph 'Umar Farooq ﷺ see him there, he was surprised and asked him why he had come there.

He answered:

"Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ cannot stand the fact that I speak the truth and ordered me to leave Damascus. That is why I have come here."

'Umar Farooq ﷺ was very sorry to hear this and said:

"It is because of people of integrity such as you that the world survives. Allâh Almighty destroys the country where people of such virtuous and pure temperaments do not live. Please rest here for a while and then return to Damascus. In my view it is very important that you continue to live there. In Hereafter the commands of Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ will not be applicable to you."

Then he issued an order from the Government to Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ saying that 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ would continue to live in Damascus and be exempt from his official decrees and rulings. In future I do not wish to receive any complaints about him."

During the Caliphate of 'Uthmân bin 'Affan ﷺ Amir Mu'âwiyah ﷺ wrote a letter to the Caliph saying:

"'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ has created a lot of problems for me in Syria and I am at the end of my tether. My patience has worn thin and things have reached such a stage that we just cannot stay in the same place together. I request that you recall him to Al-Madinah, otherwise I will have to leave this place as I just cannot tolerate any more from him."

After examining the circumstances, Caliph 'Uthmân bin 'Affân ﷺ asked him to return to Al-Madinah.

In spite of having a very fiery temperament, 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ was an extremely intelligent, sensitive, kind-hearted and loving person. 'Uthmân bin Abi Al-'Âtikah narrates that one day 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit ﷺ was walking along the banks of a deserted city. He told

his servant to get him a *Miswâk* (twig) of a tree. As he was about to obey him and go, he called him back saying:

"Let it be. This tree is green and this green branch is worthless today. Tomorrow when it dries up it will be used as fuel; at that time it will have value and be expensive. So we should not cause any loss."

'Ubâdah bin Waleed remarks that 'Ubâdah bin Sâmit رض was a tall, well-built and healthy man with a dignified and charismatic personality. He died in the city of Ramlah at the age of seventy-two. Rajâ' bin Abi Salamah says that he was buried in Damascus.

'Allâmah Dhahbi in his famous book, *Seer A'lâm Al-Nabla'* writes that one hundred and eighty-one *Ahâdîth* are narrated by him.

"Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing (unto Him)!" (89:28)